



A MAN

OF GOD



OR

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I remain
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Peter M'owan

A MAN OF GOD:
OR,
PROVIDENCE AND GRACE EXEMPLIFIED
IN
A MEMOIR OF THE
REV. PETER M'OWAN:

COMPILED CHIEFLY FROM HIS LETTERS AND PAPERS.

BY THE
REV. JOHN M'OWAN.

EDITED BY
G. OSBORN, D.D.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."—PSALM xxiii. 6.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE name of PETER M'OWAN will not soon die. In the minds of thousands of living men and women it recalls the idea of serious godliness, and awakes recollections of tender sympathies, earnest exhortations, eloquent preaching, and prevailing prayer. With these recollections it will be handed on to another generation, and to perpetuate and spread them it was very fit that this book should be written. A faithful record of a good man's life is a public benefit, extending and multiplying the blessedness of those who knew him. Like the contribution sent of old from Achaia to Jerusalem, it not only supplies the wants and ministers to the spiritual life of saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God both on account of the author and the subject of the biography.

So may it be with this volume, which comes to the reader under somewhat peculiar circumstances. My venerable friend the author speaks of it as his first

attempt at authorship, and as made in his eightieth year. It was completed more than two years ago, although, owing to various circumstances, some of them quite accidental, the publication has been delayed till now; and, consequently, the author will see his first publication issued in his eighty-third year,—an undoubted “curiosity of literature.” In fulfilling his wish that I would revise the work, and carry it through the press, I have not found it necessary to make any extensive alterations. A few corrections in words or figures, required by lapse of time or memory, with an occasional transposition or change in the structure of a sentence to make the meaning clearer, do not in the slightest degree affect the integrity of the book; and to these I have confined myself, with the exception of a Postscript added to the concluding chapter. The author's Preface is therefore still strictly applicable, and is accordingly subjoined.

The sacred history tells us little of St. Andrew, but that little is much. “He first findeth his own brother Simon,...and he brought him to Jesus.” Had he done no more, he had not lived in vain. The glorious Apostle to whom the keys of the kingdom were given, owed his conversion to a brother's love and care; and these pages show us another Peter a partaker of like

precious faith, and a fellow elder with the Apostle, brought to the enjoyment of the same salvation by the like instrumentality. Happy brothers both! May St. Andrew find many more imitators!

G. O.

RICHMOND, SURREY,
May 2nd, 1873.

PREFACE.

THE following Memoir unfolds the PRIVATE life and character of a devoted Christian and a thorough Methodist preacher. The design at first was to prepare a biographical article for the "Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine;" but on commencing this it soon appeared that something more was requisite as a suitable record of the goodness of God to His honoured servant.

The copious and open-hearted correspondence with me which my dear brother maintained throughout the long period of his religious life, much of which has been preserved,—together with letters to his family when from home on public duties, and other documents,—not only afforded ample material, but, from the nature of their contents, appeared to suggest sufficient reasons for a more extended memorial.

Of the other valuable communications with which I have been favoured respecting my brother, those from the Revs. Richard Heape, Thomas Jackson, Dr. Hoole, and William Walker, Esq., of Lytham, were addressed to myself. The rest are extracts from papers which were kindly forwarded in connection with his death and funeral sermon.

My task, therefore, has been chiefly to select and to arrange from the whole, so as to form, in the order of dates, a continuous narrative of the principal incidents of the life of PETER M'OWAN. He thus becomes, as far as possible, his own biographer. His letters are left to make their own impression upon the thoughtful reader. And as he wrote in the several characters of minister, husband, father, brother, friend, those who knew him will perceive the beautiful harmony between his public and private life.

It is matter of fervent gratitude on my part that, having first been made the instrument of leading such a brother to the knowledge of the Saviour, I should now be spared to endeavour to embalm his memory in the free utterances of his own loving heart, and in the fragrant affections and pleasing testimonies of his brethren.

May it please the God of all grace to make this imperfect labour of love useful in the promotion of His own glory!

BOWDON VALE, *February 24th, 1871.*

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LIFE AND LETTERS

OF THE

REV. PETER M'OWAN.

CHAPTER FIRST.

EARLY DAYS: 1795-1813.

PETER M'OWAN, the second son of his parents, was born in Crieff, Perthshire, on February 1st, 1795. The town is beautifully situated on the slope of a hill at the head of Strathearn. The hill, viewed from the south, seems to rest on the bosom of the Grampians; and its top is covered with a large wood. To the west, the river Earn is seen emerging from among the small wood-clothed hills which skirt the base of the loftier mountains, and, leaving Turlam Hill and Drummond Castle with its picturesque woods on the right, flows past the town, and enters upon its course through the broad and fruitful vale which bears its name.

Peter's parents belonged to the sober, industrious class of the Scottish population. His father was the son of a farmer in the neighbourhood; his mother, a native of Breadalbane, was a pattern of domestic industry and economy. They regularly attended the parish kirk, and from early life it was the delight of both their sons to accompany them to the house of God.

From his childhood Peter was highly interesting. His dimpled cheek, his winning smile, his kindly eye, his soft word, and his constant flow of good-nature, made him a favourite with all who knew him; and as he continued to reside with his parents until he began his probation as a minister of the Gospel, it was his happiness to have been preserved from all the contaminations of a vicious life.

We received a common education, but superior in some respects to that of our school-fellows of the same class; and as we became fond of reading, our father was careful to procure for us many entertaining and instructive books on various subjects. Having obtained a certificate from our schoolmaster, I also got some valuable historical works from the large Free Library of Innerpaffray, three miles down on the banks of the Earn. On one occasion, when not eleven years of age, the book I chose was the huge folio of Sir Walter Raleigh's "History of the World," which I managed to carry home with much pleasure, and not without some toil. As we grew up and acquired means, we purchased not a few books ourselves, among which was a large new publication, on Geography, in numbers, which, when bound, formed three thick octavos. This work contributed largely to our acquaintance with "the globe and its concerns."

We were not very closely confined to work. Our father gave us frequent holidays, many of which we delighted to spend with our fishing-rods on the mountain streams of the Grampians or on the Earn in the vale; and we rejoiced greatly in bringing home a good "take" of trout.

Besides our regular attendance at the kirk, we were instructed to read and reverence the Bible, and to store our memories with many portions of the Sacred Book,—with the Psalms in the metrical version, the Westmin-

ster Shorter Catechism and its Scripture proofs, and other sacred pieces. To repeat these frequently formed part of the family exercises on Sabbath evenings ; and though at the time we understood little more than the letter of these Scripture teachings, they became of vast benefit to us, as they rose up again in our memory when we received the light of heaven into our hearts, and especially after we became ministers of the Gospel.

Although we had no correct knowledge of the way of salvation, and of the privileges of the people of God, we were deeply conscious of being sinners before Him, and of our need of rest to our souls ; but the latter we knew not how to obtain. Unknown to each other at the time, we often stole away to retired spots on week-day evenings, and after public worship on Sundays, with our pocket Bibles to the neighbouring woods, to read, and meditate on our state as sinners, and to pray that God would direct our wandering feet into the way of peace.

For several years at this time our father was a reader of the "Evangelical Magazine;" and we were very much interested with the accounts it contained of the labours and trials of Dr. Vanderkemp and his associates in their missionary work in South Africa. These narratives made a deep impression upon our minds, and, I believe, sowed in our hearts the seeds of that love to the cause of Foreign Missions which we ever after delighted to cherish.

Thus far, I have had to identify my own case with that of my brother. It will now be proper to introduce the commencement of a narrative of his early life and experience, written by himself in 1821, when stationed in Dunfermline.

"When very young," he says, "I was the subject of many Divine impressions, and heavenly drawings. I was often led to pray earnestly, and can recollect some

distinct answers to prayer. Once in particular, when my mother was in an agony from cramp, I went into a little room and pleaded with many tears that God would abate the pain, and thereby assure me of His love. Before I rose from my knees, her cries subsided. I felt assured my prayer was answered; and after giving God thanks, I went down stairs, and with wondering awe looked on whilst she and the rest of the family acknowledged the hand of the great Deliverer.

“I had a great abhorrence of swearing; but on one occasion, in the excitement of a game, a profane word escaped my lips. Happily for me, a woman who was standing at her door, opposite the field where we were striving for the mastery, heard me, and called out, expressing her astonishment that *Peter M'Owan* should utter such a word! I was cut to the heart, and felt as if the earth would open its mouth and swallow me up. So alarmed was I, that I could not continue the game, but ran off, and got into a quiet spot, and there craved forgiveness of God. This woman at that time made little or no profession of religion; but subsequently both she and her husband professed to derive great good from my humble efforts at preaching in my native town.

“‘Evil communications corrupt good manners.’ It was so in my case. By yielding to the solicitations of companions my devotional habits were interrupted by card-playing. Of this, though I never played for money, I became passionately fond; and was induced to relinquish it only because it destroyed all relish for prayer, and consumed the time I required for reading; besides leading me into the company of those whose principles and practices I disliked. Dancing was another of my besetments; and this also I found to be inconsistent with secret prayer. In this exercise [dancing], though I tried hard, I never excelled; and finding myself eclipsed by

those whom on other accounts I despised, I gave it up; but not before I had suffered much spiritual loss. In only one instance did I visit the theatre; but that single visit left an indelible impression of the fascinating and ensnaring influences of such exhibitions.

“Walking through the fields and neighbouring woods on the evenings of the Lord’s day was a practice very prevalent amongst the youth of Crieff; and with but slight compunction I indulged in it whenever the weather permitted. To have neglected the morning and afternoon services in the parish church, in order to saunter in the country, would have been thought profane; but to spend the evenings thus was deemed quite harmless. I look back with deep regret on these Sunday excursions. They obliterated the few serious impressions made by the word, and led me into bad company.

“Though from my childhood I was trained to attend the parish church on the Lord’s day, I have but a slight recollection of the sermons I heard. The ministry as a whole was unevangelical and unimpressive. The minister was a grave old man, irreproachable in manners, but considered too intent about the sale of his corn and the increase of his stipend, while negligent of the sick. A witty old man, who often visited my father’s house, went on one occasion to request him to visit a dying man. The request was delivered at the market cross, in the midst of the farmers who were busy with the corn-dealers. A promise was given that at such an hour he would be at the house. ‘Weel, weel,’ said the old man, ‘I’ll gang back and tell Death not to come till after twall o’clock, as Mr. S. canna come sooner.’ The minister took the hint, and without delay attended to his duty.”

It would seem that Methodism had never visited

our native town, which, as it lies considerably to the left of the direct road from Stirling to Perth, was not in the line which Mr. Wesley and his preachers took on their way to the north of Scotland. Except by reading in the newspapers of the successful opposition of the Methodists, in 1811, to the notorious Bill of Lord Sidmouth, we knew nothing of Methodism, and up to that time were not aware that there was a single Methodist Society in Scotland.

In the year 1813, the Rev. Messrs. Valentine Ward and John James were stationed as Wesleyan ministers in the Glasgow circuit. They were much beloved by the people, and by their instrumentality many souls were brought to the knowledge of the Saviour. Among others, Alexander Strachan, a young man from the neighbourhood of Perth, was brought under deep concern for his soul by the ministry of Mr. Ward; and just then the writer, who had known him when resident in Crieff two years before, also came to Glasgow. I was weary and sick of sin, which I had long, but vainly, tried to conquer; I was miserable also in resisting the strivings of the Holy Spirit, and ready in self-despair to give up prayer, and throw myself into the vortex of a vicious life. Not knowing that Strachan was in Glasgow, I was yet led by a remarkable chain of providences to take lodgings in the same family with him; and thus by a way I knew not, and before I was well aware, the God of infinite mercy rescued me from sinking beyond hope, and led me into the way of peace. We were mutually pleased to renew our acquaintance, although (as he afterwards confessed) he at first felt shy, lest I should prove hurtful rather than serviceable to his progress in religion.

On the first Sunday evening after my arrival, a

friend, one of three brothers, members of the Methodist Society, who had known him from his boyhood, and who had recently met with him in Glasgow, called to invite him again to the chapel. I accompanied them. We heard Mr. Ward preach from the parable of the virgins. His mild but dignified manner and ministerial appearance won my attention. His prayers were such direct, reverential, and earnest pleadings with God, and the sermon such an affectionate and powerful address to the hearts of his hearers, as far surpassed all I had ever witnessed. I was deeply affected; for the word came with power to my heart, and arraigned me as a sinner before God. I felt as if I saw the *door shut against me*; and the words, "I know you not," sank into my inmost soul. After a few days Strachan and I opened our minds to each other, and resolved to ask admission into the Methodist Society. We soon obtained a sense of pardoning mercy, and rejoiced together, believing in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

During the ensuing summer Mr. Strachan had to return to Perth, where, under the pastoral care of the Rev. W. Clegg, he was before long invited to exhort, and then to exercise as a local preacher; until, by the Conference of 1815, he was received on probation for the ministry.

On obtaining mercy, I wrote to my relatives in Crieff, giving them an account of the blessed change I had experienced, and exhorting them all to seek the same happiness. The effects of this communication will appear by resuming my brother's narrative.

"When I was about eighteen years of age, my eldest brother went to reside in Glasgow, when it pleased God in His mercy to awaken him to a sense of his guilt, and to lead him to His Son as the Saviour

of sinners. No sooner were his eyes opened than he thought of his blinded relatives at home, and in a letter to me unbosomed his soul. He began by confessing his former unkindness to me, and the irregularities of his past life. This melted and overcame me. I had always regarded him as the best of brothers, and thought, if I could only imitate him, I should do well. In his letter, he said, 'I have engaged in a struggle which will terminate only with my existence. I have roused the enmity of one who will not fail to pursue me to the gates of death; but I have also found a Friend to help me in this dreadful struggle, who is all-powerful, and ever ready to assist, if I ask Him.' This language is perfectly intelligible to a spiritual mind; but through the darkness which shrouded my soul, to me it was full of mystery, so that I doubted whether he had not committed some terrible crime, or else had become insane. My dear parents were greatly alarmed. They cried out, 'He is beside himself,' and consulted how he could be got home. In the mean time my eye ran over the succeeding lines. By them my fears were dispelled, and though, like Peter of old, I knew not what I said, I replied, 'He is not mad, but we are. I do not understand it; but I believe there is something in religion to which we are entire strangers.' We all wept, and at that moment, I believe, the Holy Spirit lodged an arrow of deep conviction in every heart. From that day my cry was, 'What must I do to be saved?' My brother asked me in his next letter, where I should have been had I died before that moment. My half-awakened conscience readily replied, 'In endless misery!' By that precious letter I was more fully instructed in the things of God. Though for a time I could only see my guilt and the danger of my state, yet I praised God that I was in the region of

hope, and said with trembling awe, 'I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord!'" (Words which were fulfilled afterwards in a sense which he then little thought of.) "For two months I remained without any settled peace. When reading the Bible and attending the means of grace, transient flashes of joy would cross my mind, but my mental agonies were often great. I saw not the wisdom of the mediatorial plan; I strove to recommend myself to God by the deeds of the law, and sometimes my soul rose in sullen displeasure with God, for making faith the only condition of justification. I was often tempted to despair of ever finding mercy; but an unseen Hand kept my head above the waters. When I remember the many ways in which my proud spirit attempted to purchase His favour, I wonder at His patience; and I adore His grace, which drew me from every lying refuge, and stripped me of every plea, save, 'Lord, I'm condemned, but Thou hast died!'"*

"One Saturday morning I rose early and went into the fields. My distress was very great. I read the first chapter of Joshua. God applied the words, and it seemed as if He said to me, 'Be strong and of a good courage.' The chapter became luminous with Gospel light, and it appeared to me that what Joshua was to Israel, Jesus was to me,—a Divinely-appointed Deliverer and Saviour. I felt encouraged, prayed over it, offered myself to God upon my knees, and pleaded His great mercy in Christ Jesus. It was not in vain. God heard my cry. Faith sprang up in my heart. The language of confidence dwelt on my tongue; God was awfully near. The storm subsided, and there was a great calm throughout my troubled

* He had been furnished with a copy of Wesley's Hymns, which at this time was of great use to him.

soul. I believed without an effort, and I praised redeeming grace, assured that it extended to me. I was happy, and came home a new creature. Next day I joined myself to the Lord in a perpetual covenant at His holy table, when His banner over me was love. I sat in heavenly places, and would have preached Christ to all the world, or cried in death, 'Behold, behold the Lamb!'

"In the mediatorial plan I now saw spotless holiness, inflexible justice, and infinite wisdom and mercy, all blended in sweetest harmony. It gave me sincere pleasure to see that no attribute suffered, while I, the chief of sinners, was saved. Instead of being pained that boasting was excluded, I rejoiced that it was by faith that it might be by grace. Salvation flowing through the blood of the Lamb appeared to me infinitely more valuable than it could have done, had I procured it by merit, which I now saw to be absolutely impossible. Sin appeared to me exceedingly sinful, and the evils of my heart became more apparent; but obedience was easy. Nature, providence, and revelation, all wore a new aspect, and furnished me with new sources of sanctified pleasure. For some months I walked in an unclouded sky. My song every day was,—

'My God, I am Thine, What a comfort Divine,
What a blessing to know that my Jesus is mine!
In the heavenly Lamb Thrice happy I am,
And my heart it doth dance at the sound of His Name.'

"This blessed change took place in June, 1813. Soon after I went to Glasgow, where, for the first time, I heard a Wesleyan minister, and enjoyed a Methodist class-meeting. After spending about eleven days with my brother, now doubly dear, I returned home, deeply humbled, much enlightened, and greatly

quickened. I began more openly to reprove sin, to visit the sick, and exhort my former companions to seek the Lord. Some of them mocked, others were silent; but a few listened, and with these I met once a week to take counsel how to make our calling and election sure. Our meeting was secret, but it was profitable. We also collected a little sum weekly, which we distributed to the most necessitous persons we knew."

Here we see Methodism or Scriptural Christianity *in the bud*.

He proceeds, "At this time I had no knowledge of any particular creeds. Though I had learned the Catechism of the Church of Scotland, I viewed it merely as a school-book, and read it as such. I had, however, arranged in my mind a system of doctrine nearly similar to that which I now believe. *While I held fast to these doctrines, my soul prospered in the Divine life.* But I was induced to abandon them in the following way. Having got the loan of some of Archbishop Tillotson's Sermons, I found in one of them my views of election clearly stated and ably defended. Overjoyed with the discovery, I showed the sermon to an old disciple, with whom I had lately become acquainted. After looking at it for some time, he said, 'You must beware of him; he is a Freewiller. He is not sound.' I asked what he meant. He then explained to me the system of Calvinism, and said, 'These are the doctrines which all evangelical ministers preach, and all pious people here, believe. The opposite system is Arminianism, and it has been the pest of the Church in all ages.' After reasoning with me a little, he withdrew, saying, he would send me a book which would put me right. It came. It was Elisha Coles's Essay on God's Sovereignty. I read

it through : and being partly convinced by his arguments, partly frightened by his bold assertions, and greatly alarmed at finding myself, as it respected religious sentiments, alone in that part of the country, I yielded, and became a Calvinist.

“ This revolution in my religious opinions was noised abroad ; not so much because I had become a Calvinist, as because I should ever have been anything else. It introduced me into the company of many who were considered religious people in Crieff and its vicinity. Some of them were deeply experienced in the things of God. To me they were kind, condescending, and useful. I loved them as my brethren and sisters in the Lord, and hope to meet them at the right hand of God. The Rev. John Russell, minister of the neighbouring parish of Muthil, in particular, was kind, and is dear to me, beyond expression. I look back with much pleasure and gratitude to the time when I attended his Bible class. The privilege, also, of sitting for a time under his ministry,* I reckon amongst the great mercies of my life. He was a Calvinist in principle, but his sermons were always enriched with the peculiar glories of the Gospel. By the ungodly he was slandered, but by the pious he was revered ; and many ‘ in that day ’ will rise up to call him blessed.

“ Among my new acquaintances I found some who were ready to talk fluently about doctrines, ministers, sermons, and sinners ; but when I spoke to them about the peace, joy, and hope which I had, through believing, they answered me in the language of distrust,

* It was customary at that time for many of the more serious people of Crieff to go on the Lord’s day to Muthil, three miles distant, to hear Mr. Russell, in preference to their own less profitable minister.

or were silent. They said that *some* of God's eminent servants were favoured with such experience, but that in general they had to walk in darkness or doubt until a little before death. Hearing this again and again from persons who feared God, whose Biblical knowledge was respectable, and whose attendance on Divine ordinances was regular, I began to fear that I was *too* happy, and too confidently assured of my acceptance in the Beloved. By degrees I ceased to prize these precious fruits of the Spirit, and in proportion as I undervalued them they decayed. Hearing many injudicious remarks about good works, the finished work of Christ, and the security of God's elect, I became less anxious about purity of heart, less afraid of some things which had the appearance of evil; and my fear of trusting in good works was often so great, that I have suffered the opportunity of performing them to pass unimproved. My love to God and man, being thus smothered, became weak, and my peace, not being cherished by Christian diligence and self-denial, soon died out. As I avoided outward sin, and held fast the form of godliness, I began to think that perhaps my darkness and deadness were Divinely appointed to keep me humble, and to purify me more fully. I prayed against it, but not in faith; I strove, but not vigorously, lest I should be resisting the will of God.

"In this languishing condition I spent many days with very few intervals of pleasure. Indeed, the distress I often endured exceeds description. Sometimes I was tempted to doubt the reality of all I had once experienced of the pleasantness of religion. At other times I stood trembling on the verge of infidelity. Again, it was suggested, that I had committed the unpardonable sin; and many dark thoughts floated in

my mind. I was unhappy. As my conduct and conversation were strictly moral,...as I regularly attended the church, and as I was *sensible* of my distress, my religious friends were not alarmed at my state. Instead of exhorting me to arise, and shake myself from the dust, they attempted to comfort me where I lay. Instead of pointing to sin as the cause of my darkness, their exhortations in general seemed to go on the supposition that the will of God required it, and they urged me to wait patiently till the Lord should be pleased to lift upon me the light of His reconciled countenance. All this was well meant of them, and it seemed like good advice. But, alas! it excused my indolence, it prolonged the delusion, and led to deeper gloom. Nothing could cheer me, and every creature seemed to reprove me. While others retired to sleep, my wakeful eyes refused to close. In the darkness of night I have wandered through the fields, sometimes supplicating for mercy, sometimes giving thanks for a ray of hope, sometimes unable to pray or praise; and at other times I stretched myself on the ground in a state of silent despair."

We have seen what Scriptural Christianity did for Peter M'Owan while he was "without any knowledge of particular creeds," and now we see how the "particular creed" of Calvinism affected his simple, unprejudiced mind. He needs a fresh deliverance; and his compassionate Saviour has provided this for him in a way that unfolds new wonders of Providence and Grace.

It has been previously mentioned that Crieff had never been visited by any Methodist minister. But during the summer of 1814, while Peter M'Owan was struggling in his distress, the Rev. William Clegg, then stationed in Perth, seventeen miles distant, made several visits to the place, and was pleased to see large congregations assemble to hear him preach. He also

called at my father's house, most likely at the suggestion of my friend Strachan, who, it will be remembered, had removed from Glasgow to Perth, and who knew of my brother's conversion. Mr. Clegg at once felt interested in Peter, and most likely on this, as well as on other accounts, was disposed to repeat his visits. But he was not prepared to see, in the Stations issued by the Conference of 1814, an additional minister appointed to his circuit without his knowledge; for Perth was already largely dependent on Connexional Funds for the support of its one minister. How this appointment was brought about we never knew. That Mr. Ward, the Chairman of the District, procured it, there can be little doubt; but regarding it merely as an ordinary effort to extend Methodism in Scotland, neither my brother nor I ever made any inquiry into the causes which led him to do so. The thing, however, was done, and the Rev. Richard Heape, the newly-appointed minister, (now a venerable Supernumerary in Rochdale,) gives us the following account of his reception in his new circuit; in reading which, however, we must understand Mr. Clegg as merely wishing to test, in his pleasant way, the spirit of the young Evangelist.

“ROCHDALE, *March 29th*, 1870.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“IN 1814 the Conference appointed me to the Perth circuit. After travelling from two to three hundred miles, I arrived safe in Perth, and soon found the residence of Mr. Clegg; on knocking at the door, Mr. Clegg opened, and on seeing me, he said, ‘I presume you are Mr. Heape?’ I said, ‘My name is Richard Heape.’ He then said, ‘On receiving a copy of the Stations, I was greatly surprised to find two preachers appointed for this circuit. We never asked for a second preacher. We have no work for him to

do. We have no where for him to live ; and we have nothing for him to live upon. I presume you are sent as a missionary ; but I shall write for information to the Chairman of the District.' On doing so, he found his opinion to be correct. A meeting of the stewards and leaders was called to decide whether Crieff or Dunkeld should be my field of labour. Crieff, being the larger place, was thought most suitable. Mr. Clegg had preached there a few times, and had become acquainted with a few persons. I believe your brother was one of the number. He left me to take the Perth services on the Sunday, went himself to Crieff, arranged for a room to preach in, conducted three services on the Sunday, and published for me to preach on Monday evening, and the following Sundays in succession.

"In my first sermon at Crieff on the Monday evening, I used the words 'conditions of salvation.' The day after your brother came with another person, older than himself, to convince me of my 'heresy.'" Mr. Heape adds, that after they had heard his Scriptural vindication of the expression he had used, "new light evidently flashed upon your brother's mind, and tears ran down his face. I said, 'You see you must give up your unscriptural views of unconditional election.' He replied, with his usual energy, 'If I give up my election, I give up all my comfort.' I assured him he would have much more comfort when he got correct Scriptural views on the subject."

We again resume the narrative of my brother, but shall soon return to Mr. Heape's interesting communication.

"At this time, August, 1814, the Rev. Messrs. Clegg and Heape visited Crieff. By the kind providence of God they came to my father's house, and during their first visits my soul proved them to be the messengers of Him whose name is Love. God owned their public labours, and they were soon surrounded

by persons inquiring the way to Zion. A class-meeting was formed, and prayer-meetings established. Having experienced the benefit of class-meetings during my visit to Glasgow, I called privately on the ministers, and stated that I was glad God was working by them, and that I wished them prosperity. But as my religious opinions differed so widely from theirs, I could not promise to attend their ministry; yet if they would admit me into their class-meeting, I would esteem it a privilege, and would engage to give them no trouble with my peculiar views of doctrine. These men of God received me with Christian affection. I was made welcome to the class, even if I never attended their sermons, provided I walked according to the Gospel. This act of disinterested catholic kindness affected me much, and made me look upon the whole system of Methodism with a more charitable eye.

“After several conversations with them on controversial subjects, I consented to read the works of the Rev. John Fletcher. When I began, I was persuaded that he could not convince me; indeed, I was almost determined not to be convinced, and accordingly I read rather to detect error, than to receive instruction. But I had not gone far ere some of my strongest arguments were levelled by reasons and Scriptural quotations which I could not dispute. I was irritated, grieved, and bewildered. I searched the Scriptures, and prayed for light. I also conversed frequently with my new religious friends. To them I stated objections which rose in my mind against opinions which I loved, and from which I was unwilling to part. Their answers for some time did not satisfy me, and tended rather to increase than to allay my doubts. This struggle continued until my health was much impaired, and my soul brought into a state

of deplorable leanness. But, glory be to God, it terminated in my embracing that form of doctrine in which I now glory, and which I have seen to be the power of God to the salvation of many.

“Soon after this, God showed me more clearly from whence I had fallen. He enabled me to repent and do my first works, and by a fresh application to the blood of Jesus my peace was restored, and my first love regained. A sermon preached by Mr. Heape, from Job xxix. 2, ‘O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me,’ was the principal means of my restoration.

“I had not been long in the Society before Messrs. Clegg and Heape spoke to me about giving ‘a word of exhortation.’ They seemed to me as men that mocked. I wondered how such good men could sport with my feelings. They assured me they were in earnest, and urged it upon me. I resisted and grieved them. I was even rude to them, and requested them not to speak to me on the subject again. The elevated views I had formed of the ministerial office—my youthfulness—my want of piety and learning, and the singularity of lay-preaching in the town where I resided, all forbade me to think of complying with their request. Meantime, the solemn surrender I had made on entering into covenant with God, came into my mind. The word of the Lord was also a fire in my bones, and the souls of men lay heavy upon my conscience. Yet I could not consent to lead classes or to exhort. I felt inwardly impelled to do both; but I thought this to be pride, which it was my duty to resist. I had nearly lost my peace and health again. It pleased God at this time to call Alexander Strachan to the regular work of the ministry, and his removal left a small Society destitute of preaching.

Being urged again by Mr. Heape, after beseeching God in some way to show His displeasure if it were contrary to His will, I set off, unknown to any in the town. I met the people in the name of the Lord; and found no lack of words, matter, or feeling. My fears, however, were not quite silenced, and I continued to pray for light. God was kind. He opened my understanding in the knowledge of His Word. He gave me favour in the eyes of the people. He increased my peace. He improved my health and made me useful to some souls; so that it came to this: 'Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!'"

Just before my brother's retirement to Bristol in 1868, on referring to these scenes of his early life, he told me that during his mental struggle about attempting to preach, he sometimes, in order to relieve his mind, repaired to the large wood that covered the top of the hill behind the town. There, in its solitudes, far from the ken of mortals, as he believed, in imagination making the trees his auditors, he preached earnestly the way of salvation. If the fire in his bosom failed to set the wood in flames, the labour proved not to have been altogether in vain; for, as he added, many years after, he was greatly surprised and pleased in meeting with a person who told him that, unobserved, he had heard one of these *fir-tree* sermons; and, by the blessing of God, was so convinced of sin, that he felt constrained to receive it as a call from God; that he sought and obtained mercy and forgiveness of his sins, and still continued to hold fast his confidence in God.

The "Small Society" mentioned above was in Methven, about half-way between Perth and Crieff. Before the appointment of Mr. Heape to Crieff this had been the *only* country place in the Perth circuit. It had

long been the residence of the three Methodist brothers mentioned previously, who fell in with Mr. Strachan in Glasgow, and who, having known him in Methven from his boyhood, and aware that by the recent death of his excellent mother he was rendered homeless; were the more anxious to lead him to the knowledge of the Saviour. In this town also Strachan, after his return from Glasgow, as the only local preacher in the Perth circuit, preached the Gospel for a year to his old acquaintances, and was thus so far trained for the regular ministry. And here, too, as his successor, Peter, by preaching for two years as a local preacher, was prepared for the same work. Such coincidences seem worthy of record.

Having supplied the place of Brother Strachan, from August, 1815, Messrs. Clegg and Heape agreed that their young friend should be recommended to the District Meeting in May, 1816, as a candidate for the Methodist ministry. And now another scene occurred, which must be given in the words of Mr. Heape.

"He walked with me from Crieff to Edinburgh, a distance of fifty miles, to be examined at the District Meeting. He was entertained at the house of Mr. Ward, our chairman. Our meeting was to commence the following morning at six o'clock. I was in the vestry before the time. Mr. Ward came in soon after, and with a very grave face said, 'Brother Heape, what have you brought that young man for? He will never stand our work.' 'What reason,' I asked, 'have you for that opinion?' He replied, 'Soon after he came last night, we got a little supper. I then read a chapter, and desired him to pray. On kneeling down, he uttered two or three sentences, when he fainted, and fell unconscious on the floor.' I said, 'If you had walked fifty miles with me yesterday as he did, I should not have

been surprised if you had done so too.' (Mr. Ward was very tall and stout.) 'Why, did he?' 'Yes he did.' This seemed to satisfy his doubts. He deemed it right, however, to mention the circumstance to the meeting, before the young men were called in; but my statement satisfied them on this point. After the examination he was unanimously and most cordially recommended to the Conference, and accepted. He was admitted on trial by the Conference of 1817."

In my brother's account of the above scene, he told me, that on becoming conscious the first thing that attracted his attention, was the portly form of the good man bending compassionately over him, and saying, "Poor Peter!" evidently considering it a hopeless case. It was, most likely, a dark night to poor Peter. But as Mr. Heape has informed us, light came in the morning.

The Home-mission to Crieff was maintained only for four years. A goodly number of precious souls were converted to God, who, after the preacher was withdrawn, continued to adorn their Christian profession. Had not this mission been undertaken, my brother was not likely ever to have become connected with Methodism; but occurring just at this time, it became a nursery for training him, both as a member and minister of the body. Surveying all these remarkable leadings and interpositions of Providence and Grace, we have oft been constrained to say,—

"Thou giv'st the power Thy grace to move
O wondrous grace! O boundless love!"

CHAPTER SECOND.

HIS FIRST CIRCUITS.

BEFORE following my brother to his first circuit, we would here remark, that as we began to feel the influence of Methodism, it appeared to us a system entirely new ; and the state of the Christian Church was a subject unstudied by us. But now, being brought out of darkness into marvellous light, the darkness which still surrounded us appeared the more intense. The fearful and general apathy of the parochial clergy, and the quiet unaggressive state of the other denominations ; together with the general opinion that in England matters were no better,—led us to look upon Methodism as introducing a new era in the history of Christianity. Multitudes more might have thought so too : but we did not know that, and reference is now made to what were our mutual feelings at that time.

We saw in it “the glad tidings to all people,” without any unconditional decree of reprobation. We saw in it a body of converted ministers to proclaim these glad tidings, and to declare to their hearers their own experience of the grace of God. We saw a people in every stage of Christian experience, meeting regularly to edify and comfort one another, as directed by the Word of God. We saw every means used to encourage the people to search the Scriptures and improve their minds ; and the various gifts and graces of all called out to promote the glory of God, with a faithful and

efficient discipline to preserve the purity of both ministers and people. All this gradually rose before our inquiring and admiring minds; and as we could see nothing like it elsewhere, we became convinced that this was a people by whose instrumentality God designed to bring in the promised glory of the latter days; and that other forms of Christianity would be made useful for the same end in proportion as they might be assimilated to this system, or influenced by it.

These became our settled convictions; and with them deeply rooted in his heart, Peter M'Owan entered upon his work as a Christian minister with a soul truly catholic, and through more than half a century of zealous and useful labours gave full proof that they remained his unaltered sentiments to his dying day.

By the Conference of 1817 he was appointed to the Greenock and Port Glasgow circuit; and he went to it with a deep sense of his insufficiency, but resolved to give himself soul and body to the work. From the first, his manner in the pulpit was marked by peculiar energy and vehemence. It seemed often as if the spirit would burst its small and feeble tenement. But it was natural to him, it was the expression of his burning love to souls, and he felt that he must preach thus, or not preach at all. His hearers, however, generally gave him credit for sustaining this action by corresponding worth in his discourses. His ministry, therefore, was at once popular and useful. He was soon encouraged by the large increase in the congregations, and by seeing some souls converted to God. The chapel at Greenock was often overflowing half an hour before service-time. "But," he writes, "what signify large congregations, large collections, or the praise of the people, if sinners be not converted to God, and believers edified in their most holy faith?"

These outward things Satan would have young men to rest in ; but let us, my dear brother, ever cry, 'Give me souls, or else I die!'" So wrote the ardent evangelist, no doubt from the sincerity as well as from the fulness of his heart. But Satan for a time got an advantage of him. He had never before seen such flocking to hear the Word of God ; and although his Superintendent was a worthy, respectable preacher, it was evident that he himself was the main object of attraction.

Was it any wonder that, with all his knowledge of Satan's devices, he should soon be suffering from the poison of his subtile darts ? As he afterwards confessed, he gave way to pride ; and what follows is an abridgment, in *his own phraseology*, of his conflict with his foe. For a season no conversions appeared. Conscious that he preached the full Gospel, he was dissatisfied, and blamed himself for lack of earnestness. He "put to more strength," but failed at the time to observe that this strength was his own. He was sure that it was with the sacred rod he struck the rock, yet he perceived not that it was too much in the spirit of, "Hear, ye rebels ;" and as he struck again and again, he was astonished that no water flowed. He thought he did well to be angry. His soul became barren as the rock. He had no liberty in prayer. His wants were many, but his sensibility of them was weak. Satan had power, and he used it well. He was tempted to doubt the great truths of Christianity, especially the doctrine of the Trinity, and even the existence of God ! Was he not then deceived himself, and deceiving others ? Had he not better desist from preaching ? Or if these were only temptations, yet, as they had been so much yielded to, was he not in danger of becoming a cast-away ? Thus he felt, and thus he reasoned, as the fiery darts stuck in him, producing bitterness of soul.

But he adds, "Glory be to God, He gave me to see by various means, that arguments, however polished and pointed, cannot pierce the callous heart, unless urged home by Divine power; that even the pure Word of God cannot prevail, unless applied by the Holy Spirit now. I have learned by all this painful teaching, that all my strength and help are laid up in God, and must be received by simple faith. Since my recovery, I have had many sweet seasons in communion with God, but am ashamed that I should be so easily moved. Pray for me."

At the close of the year it was found that the Society had considerably increased in number; but expecting to be removed to another field of labour, as the Conference of 1818 assembled, he resolved to renew his covenant with God. The following is a

COPY OF HIS SOLEMN ENGAGEMENT.

"PORT GLASGOW, *July 26th*, 1818.

"ETERNAL AND EVER-BLESSED JEHOVAH,

"I DESIRE to present myself before Thee with the deepest humiliation and abasement of soul, sensible how unworthy such a sinful worm is to appear before the King of kings and Lord of lords, especially on such an occasion as this.

"Yet, Lord, the plan is Thine own. In infinite condescension Thou hast said, 'Incline your ear, and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.' And again, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate;...and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.' Thy condescending mercy has proposed it, and Thy constraining grace has inclined my heart to accept it.

"I come, therefore, acknowledging myself to have been a great offender, crying, 'God be merciful to me

a sinner!' I particularly deplore before Thee the pride of my heart, the power of unbelief in me, and my want of love to Thee, and the flock over which Thou hast placed me, together with a lack of zeal, simplicity, and sincerity. O my God, I have been faithless to my solemn vows, I have grieved Thy Holy Spirit, and since I knew Thee, I have deserved to be cast into hell!

"But still Thou sayest, 'Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.' I come at Thy kind invitation, trusting in my Saviour, and entreating that for His sake Thou wouldst be merciful to my unrighteousness.

"Receive now, I beseech Thee, a returning prodigal who is deeply convinced of Thy inalienable right to him and all that he has. This day, O Holy Father! I solemnly surrender myself unto Thee, I renounce all other lords and masters. In Thy name I set myself against pride and unbelief, lukewarmness, ostentation, and impatience; humbly imploring Thee to assist me in all these struggles with these enemies of my peace, and to bestow upon me a large portion of those graces of which I especially stand in need.

"I consecrate to Thee all that I am, and all that I have: the faculties of my soul, the members of my body, my worldly substance, my influence over others, to be used and improved for Thy glory; ever holding myself in an attentive posture to observe and obey the first intimations of Thy will.

"To Thy direction I resign myself, to be guided as Thou in Thy infinite wisdom shalt see best to order concerning me. To Thee I leave the management of all events, and say, without reserve, 'Not my will, but Thine be done.' And O! do Thou direct Thy servants who are now met in Conference to consult about the affairs of Thy Zion. Let every preacher be sent to that spot where Thou wilt make him most useful, and be pleased to remember me in this respect. O God, help me to submit my own will to Thine! May I rejoice ever more with a loyal heart in Thy unlimited and righteous government.

“Let me live freely justified through the merits of Thy Son. Ever sprinkle my conscience with the blood of the Covenant. Sanctify me throughout, and transform me fully into the image of Thy dear Son. Impart unto me, through Him, all needful supplies of Thy Holy Spirit to enlighten, strengthen, and comfort me. May it be my happy privilege always to rejoice in the Lord,—to be useful in Thy service, and to do Thy blessed will all the days of my life; and when the solemn hour of death comes, may I be enabled to glorify Thee with my latest breath, and rest in Thy everlasting arms. O! do Thou put strength and confidence into my departing spirit, and receive me to Thyself.

“With humble dependence on Thy assistance, O ever-blessed Jehovah! I subscribe my name to this covenant, praying that it may be ratified in heaven.

“PETER M'OWAN.”

By the Conference of 1818, he was appointed to the Aberdeen circuit, where, during the previous year, his brother had been the colleague of the Rev. Valentine Ward; and now, together, we lived in the family, and enjoyed the advantages of the Superintendency, of our esteemed father in the Gospel.

On his arrival, we were on the eve of changing the chapel, and the residence of the ministers in the city. The circumstances which led to this change were somewhat peculiar, and as they are connected with the history of Methodism in Aberdeen, as well as with our residence and labours there, it seems proper that some notice should be taken of them.

When Mr. Ward and I came to the circuit the year before, we were told some very startling stories about strange sounds that had been heard a short time before in the ministers' house, and how the preachers who had just left, had been annoyed by them. These stories, we found, were also most surely believed by very respectable and sensible people. Let it be under-

stood that the house fronted Queen Street, and that the Octagon chapel was joined to the wall behind; a wide passage under part of the house being the entrance from the street into the chapel, and to a stable at the back, while the house door was half way through this passage; the gateway and house door being always made sure by lock and bars at night. Every thing passed quietly with us for some time; till one night, after retiring somewhat late, my worthy Superintendent knocked at my door, and asked whether I had heard a heavy footstep ascend the staircase (which was of wood, and had no carpet) while we were at family prayer. I told him that I had heard the step, but said, "Was it not the chapel-keeper?" "No," was the reply, "he had gone long before, and all the doors were fast. You must come and help me to search the house." With lighted candles we proceeded to search the old class-rooms and all the corners of the house. Then; after a fresh look at the door and gate fastenings, which we found all right, we thought of exploring the dark chapel behind. He stood with his candle at the entrance, lest there should be any attempt at escape. I went to examine the pews, till he called upon me to give it up. We found no ghost, and thinking it rather strange, we went to bed. From that night Mr. Ward felt uneasy in that house. Now Bishop Skinner a few months before had opened his new and beautiful chapel* near the centre of the city, leaving his old one in Longacre vacant. This was much larger than our Octagon, and with little outlay to fit it up as a Wesleyan chapel it might serve towards an extension of Methodism in Aberdeen. It was not long before the Octagon and ministers' house in Queen Street were

* "Chapel" was the usual name given in Scotland to all Episcopal places of worship.

sold, and Bishop Skinner's old chapel being purchased, it became the Wesleyan chapel in the city. Thus far, all is truth. But I give no judgment how much real ghosts had to do with the matter. I may, however, add, that the brother who left the house before we came, and who had been most annoyed by the strange noises, died in Banff, his new circuit, two months after. He was a young man from Yorkshire, of considerable promise as a minister, (sent by the President as a supply for part of the year,) and his death was accompanied with some circumstances which did not weaken the faith of his Aberdeen friends in the relations he had made to them.

An instance of the uncertainties of life and of the watchful care of Providence, occurred at this time. One morning, as I took out the horse to go to the country, I found that the saddle had been soaked through with water: and not till some days after, when I reached Newburgh, was the mystery explained. The Rev. Daniel M'Allum had been allowed by the Conference to make collections in the district for the Haddington chapel. He had got the loan of our horse to go to Peterhead. On returning, he came to the Ythan at Newburgh; and as he saw no boatman in attendance, he concluded that the river was fordable and ventured in. But the tide was too strong, and soon man and horse were carried down into deep water, towards the sea. Some fishermen resting on the opposite bank had called out to warn him; but he either heard them not, or did not understand; and if a boat had not been at hand, with which they pushed off to the rescue, there was every probability that the old horse and his young rider must have perished in the powerful current. The good brother, no doubt, felt deeply thankful for his deliverance, but thought it best, on his arrival in Aberdeen,

to say nothing about the matter, and went quietly away to fulfil his commission.

In the beginning of 1820, during my brother's second year in Aberdeen, occurrences, out of the common order, took place, which led to his removal to Dunfermline in the end of February that year. In that town a Society had been formed a few years before, and an expensive chapel had been erected : but the cause did not prosper according to expectation. After being tried by the residence and labours of faithful men during the three preceding years, the Conference of 1819 felt constrained to withdraw the minister. The Society, of course, were deeply distressed, and the heavy debt of the chapel made the affair doubly serious. It was, indeed, one of the worst of the unfortunate Scotch chapel cases. On these affairs Mr. Ward had been to Edinburgh in January, from whence he returned, with his head and heart full of a scheme, which the following extract will best explain.

“ ABERDEEN, *Feb. 11th*, 1820.

“ MY DEAR BROTHER,

“ Mr. Ward informs me that the friends in Dunfermline are anxiously desirous that I should go and spend three months with them this spring. They promise to pay all expenses ; and strange to say, I have consented. My reasons are, the leaders and members not only wish it, but are persuaded that, under God, it will be the means of reviving the drooping cause in that place. Mr. Ward thinks it a call from God, and urges me to go. Without my knowledge he has brought the matter before the leaders'-meeting in Aberdeen, and has written to official men in the country, to obtain their sanction, provided that I may be willing. Moreover, if I refuse, such is the state of our circuit finances, that Mr. Neale* must return home, which

* Mr. Neale was a hired Local preacher from Edinburgh, and a candidate for the ministry. He had been a year in Aberdeen, and we all esteemed him highly. He was called to the regular work in 1821.

would be very unpleasant to him, and he very naturally wishes me to go. But what gives weight to all, my heart is free to it. It is long since I renounced my own will, by devoting myself wholly to God. If I err in this, I know God will forgive me. Obedience and self-denial are essential to the peace of my mind. I am ready to say, How can it be that the work should revive under me, when it drooped in the hands of men whose feet I am unworthy to wash? But it is suggested, 'All things are possible with God.'"

On his arrival in Dunfermline he writes again :—

"DUNFERMLINE, *March 6th, 1820.*

"DEAR BROTHER,

"HAVING spent one Sabbath here, I hasten to give you some account of my late journeys and present situation. On Friday morning, February 25th, I left Aberdeen, and arrived in Perth at half-past seven. I found Mr. Hamer (the minister) and family all well. On Saturday I called upon cousin George, and found him enjoying spiritual and bodily health. On Sabbath I preached three times in Perth, and the congregations were good. The door collections, usually about seventeen shillings, were £2. 13s. 8d. I think they are doing well in Perth. On Monday I set out for Crieff, and went round by uncle Peter's; but found he was not at home. After urging his neighbours to prepare to meet God, I got to Methven, and preached at half-past three. About seven I got to the 'bonny town,' and found father, mother, James, and William, all well. On Wednesday I preached in the new Masons' Lodge; and although the notice was private, and consequently partial, the congregation was large. I spoke some plain things, and they heard with deep attention. On Thursday I met the friends for prayer, and felt my soul refreshed. Afterwards, I wrote to Mr. Hamer, stating what I had done, that I believed the Society might again be united, and that they and many of the other inhabitants earnestly wished him to visit them soon.

“On Friday I walked to Dunfermline, (upwards of thirty miles,) my head-quarters. I live with an affectionate family, and have a comfortable room to myself. I found a plan of the Edinburgh circuit waiting for me from Mr. Bell, the Superintendent; and, strange to say I am planned for Dunfermline principally, and for the, other parts of the circuit occasionally, *till the middle of September, without any intermission!* On inquiring into the meaning of this, I was informed that they understood I was to stay there three months certain; and if at the expiration of that period the work did not revive, I should return to Aberdeen; but if the prospect brightened, I should remain altogether. I hope they have mistaken Mr. Ward's meaning. I felt displeased, but held my peace. It gives me comfort to think that if the work revives, it will be pleasing to stay; if not, no one can force me. I intend to ask an explanation from my *bishop* when opportunity serves.

“When going to chapel yesterday, I was told it would be well if we had thirty people, but was pleased to see about sixty. In the afternoon and evening we had about one hundred. Notwithstanding the vast number of empty seats before me, I had peace in my own soul. Methodism here is an object of disgust to the great majority. I feel, however, willing to go forward, and have an ardent desire to be holy and useful. My situation is awfully important and peculiarly trying. Hope and fear struggle for the mastery in my soul, but the former is now uppermost. O, pray without ceasing! Pray for your affectionate brother.”

At this time, the character of my brother as a Wesleyan minister was in course of formation. Founded in a Scriptural conversion, his aim was to be built up in deep piety and entire consecration to the service of his Divine Master. From this proceeded that respectful and affectionate regard for the wishes of his Superintendent, in consenting to what must be regarded a

an irregular change in the field of his labour; and from the same source arose that tender respect for the feelings of his young friend and companion in labour, who having been a full year engaged in preaching, and expecting to be called into the regular ministry, must have felt it most unpleasant to think of returning again to his secular occupation. All these considerations, however, were resolved by Peter into a call for the renunciation of his own will, and for a practical expression of his devotedness to the will of God, in accordance with his own principle: "Obedience and self-denial are essential to the peace of my mind." In this spirit, therefore, he engaged in this forlorn hope, which may be regarded as the "wilderness state" of his ministerial life.

Up to the time of Mr. Ward's appointment to Scotland, the Methodist places of worship in that country, except in a very few instances, were mere rooms, or small chapels shut out of sight in long narrow passages or in secluded corners, and the cause itself might be said to have been buried alive. It was evident to any observant mind, that unless some energetic efforts were made to bring it to light, it must continue to languish in obscurity and contempt. Mr. Ward loved Methodism, as a branch of the Church of Christ, too well, and his large and benevolent heart felt for Scotland too much, as he beheld it lying quiet and cold under the pall of "Moderatism," to allow things to remain any longer in this state. But he also saw, that it must be done by going out of the old native way. There was then in the Minutes of Conference only one solitary Rule respecting the building of chapels. It was as old as 1796, and left the matter vaguely to the judgment of the District Meetings. All the organizations, now so complete, regarding chapels, missions, and other

departments of the work of God in the Connexion, were then unknown; and the men who were to form these organizations were only rising into notice. In these circumstances, was it any wonder that in an attempt to raise Methodism in Scotland out of the dust,—however pure his motives and aims,—the bold and zealous spirit of Mr. Ward should lead him into some mistakes? Do not the Chapel-Building Committee to the present day, with all their rules and all their authority, find it difficult, yea, impossible, to keep some of our people from imprudence in the erection of chapels? He believed that, with suitable places of worship, the ministry of Methodism would attract large congregations, that from these would arise increase of members, and that from both these sources the chapels would be supported, the country would be blessed, and the glory of God promoted. Actuated by these considerations, and having few around him of a kindred spirit to consult with, he ventured on until he was checked by the difficulties and embarrassments which rapidly surrounded both himself and those who were involved as trustees of the chapels. He was right in believing that something important should be done. Perhaps right also in the persuasion that *he* should make the attempt; but he was mistaken in carrying it out so far, and on such an expensive scale. He was also mistaken in his calculations of the effects it would produce on the people of Scotland, who are so tenaciously attached to their own churches, and to their Calvinistic opinions. Disappointment and embarrassment followed as the inevitable result. *These* had been felt before he went to Aberdeen: we witnessed some of his painful experiences while with him there, and from these matters proceeded my brother's removal to Dunfermline.

But if these chapels were in the first place the source of great financial difficulties, they were at least useful in bringing the ministry of Methodism more prominently before the population ; and Dr. Chalmers, who was then risen as a light upon the benighted land, was quicksighted enough to perceive it. It was about this time that he gave it the well-known description of "Christianity in earnest." He was on friendly terms with Mr. Ward, and much of the earnestness which he saw in Methodism at that time was under the ministry and superintendence of Mr. Ward, in Glasgow.*

Before taking leave of Mr. Ward in this memoir, the writer feels it his duty to state his belief that no Methodist minister ever devoted himself more earnestly to promote the work of God in Scotland, or was more successful in the conversion of souls, than this good man. He was remarkable also for the encouragement which he gave to young persons to improve their minds, and to aim at being useful.

During a period of six years, the following young men, who were brought to God mainly by his instrumentality, were called into the ministerial work in order of time, as follows :—

In 1815, Alexander Strachan, who travelled till 1858. He wrote the Life of the Rev. Samuel Leigh, missionary to Australia and New Zealand, and died in 1865.

* On one occasion, soon after he came to Glasgow, the Doctor accepted an invitation to a large meeting of the Methodists in one of their school-rooms, and, after considerable hesitation, was persuaded to speak. It was one of his earliest extempore addresses. As he proceeded he became animated, and advanced unconsciously, step by step, along the open space in the middle, until, when he finished, he found himself near the further end of the room from which he had set out. He pleasantly owned that he felt encouraged with his success in that attempt at extempore speaking.

In 1815 also, John M'Owan, who was in the full work forty-seven years.

In 1816, Ninian Barr, who passed his first ten years as a missionary in Newfoundland, and then laboured at home till 1854, and died in 1865.

In 1817, Peter M'Owan, who, after a ministry of fifty-one years, died in 1870.

In 1821, Francis Neale, who travelled in the home work twenty-seven years, and died in 1859.

Alexander Hume, now of Manchester, also shared in his kind attentions. He laboured with us during our first year in Aberdeen, and went out from thence in 1818 to Ceylon, where he translated "The Pilgrim's Progress" into the Cingalese language, and after twelve years returned to the home work.

How Mr. Ward wished his sons in the Gospel to fulfil their ministry, may be understood by the following extracts of letters received from him while I was on my first circuit :—

"EDINBURGH, *October 16th*, 1815.

"MY DEAR JOHN,

"I HAVE this morning received your welcome letter. I am glad you like your place, and that the people kindly receive you, and I trust that God will greatly bless you in your soul, your studies, and labours.

"I should like to know what you have in your library. Above all other books make yourself well acquainted with your Bible; in order to this, read it through, a part of the Old, and a part of the New, Testament every day. Next to the Bible, read Mr. Wesley's Sermons; read them again and again; swallow all his ideas, and make them your own; next, read his Life and Journals, and other works; Fletcher's Life and Works, especially his 'Portrait of St. Paul.' Next, get all of Baxter that you can; Lives of John Nelson, Thomas Walsh, and Henry Longden. Get, also, Buck's Theological Dictionary, and Dr. Olynthus Gregory's Letters on the Evidences, Doctrines, and Duties of Christianity.

“But it is not enough for you to become a mere reader, you must also think; meditation is as necessary as reading. Endeavour to think clearly and closely, and write your own remarks on what you read; it would be well to do this daily. In sermonizing, inquire first, what will be most suitable for the people? Secondly, what is the design of the sacred writer in this place? and how can I preach upon this subject, so as to give the saint and sinner their proper portion?

“But prayer is, if possible, more important. For, however well a man may talk about religion, it will do no good unless God be with him. Now we know He is never with the prayerless man, and His most powerful aid is most abundantly granted to those who pray most. When you have to preach, never be out in company till just the time of preaching, but reserve an hour for private prayer. Ascend the pulpit under a deep sense of the presence of God. Keep in constant view of the great end of preaching, the conversion of sinners, and the edification of the people of God. Preach much on experimental and practical subjects; particularly on repentance, justification, the witness of the Spirit, a present salvation, and every branch of practical righteousness. Visit the sick, and all that need your help; be very spiritual in your conversation; be kind to all; keep young women at a proper distance; fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. A letter from you will always be acceptable. Grace be with you.

“Yours affectionately,
“V. WARD.”

“EDINBURGH, *October 8th*, 1816.

“MY DEAR JOHN,

“I AM always glad to hear of or from you: of course, your last was received with pleasure. You will, I trust, never forget that piety is above all other qualifications in a Christian minister. In short, it is absolutely indispensable. May you grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God!

“Your plan of writing so much is fraught with some advantages; but it is often attended with some

evils, against which you should sedulously guard. In the first place, you will be in danger of departing from the free, fluent, extempore, animated, and pathetic Methodist preacher, and of becoming the stiff, unanimated Presbyterian. And, if I mistake not, you will feel much less willing greatly to alter, or wholly to destroy, unripe fruits which have cost so much, than you would mere outlines. But I hope you will derive the good without the evil.

"You must in every sermon aim at the conversion of sinners. Never let this be out of your mind, prayers, and sermons; and God, I hope, will give you many seals to your ministry.

"I have a good opinion of Peter, and hope he will do well. I have not yet heard from Barr. I shall be glad to see you in the course of the year, if you can make it convenient. -God bless you.

"Yours affectionately,

"V. WARD."

While we travelled with him on the Aberdeen circuit, we both noticed, and agreed in admiring, the following traits in his character and conduct:—

1. When an evil report reaches his ear, he makes proper inquiry into the case, but seldom delivers an opinion about it at that time.

2. When about to reprove, he makes mild approaches to the work, showing undesignedly that it is painful to him, and he invariably gives the accused an opportunity of stating his own case.

3. In giving reproof, he does it generally, by way of appeal; sometimes to former professions, to conscience, to privileges, or to the Scriptures.

4. He is willing to see and ready to acknowledge a little good, though surrounded with much infirmity.

5. He varies his standard of judgment, or expectation, according to the age, circumstances, and past conduct of the persons in question.

6. He soars above those little reproaches which the narrow-minded throw out against him, and leaves it to time and to God to reveal their fallacy.

7. He uses every means to reclaim and to heal before he gives the offender up, or cuts the corrupted member off; but when all fails, he acts with decision.

8. In all his trials,—and they were many, and we saw him in some of the most distressing,—he was calm, patient, self-possessed. He had the love that suffereth long, and is kind; that is not provoked; that beareth all things, endureth all things. We long admired and loved him, and now “THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED.”

It does not appear that much good was realized in Dunfermline before the Conference of 1820. Then, however, it was resolved, though not without opposition, that for the following year my brother should be appointed to the Edinburgh circuit, and change occasionally with the Edinburgh ministers; but his support was to rest entirely with the Dunfermline people. In all this, it appears, he was wholly passive. Soon after Conference, Mr. Bell, the Edinburgh Superintendent, wrote to me an account of these matters, and how he had opposed them in Conference on the ground of the hopelessness of the Dunfermline case, and the unpleasant circumstances in which my brother would be placed. A copy of the circuit-plan for six months was printed on the letter-sheet, in which Peter was appointed to preach in his own town thrice each Sunday for six successive Sundays, and then two Sundays in succession on the Edinburgh side of the circuit, beside all the week-days on his own side; and this, I believe, was the order of his work for the two following years.

He was left at liberty to mark out week-day work

for himself, but he did not spare himself. Besides Falkirk and Stirling on the south side of the river Forth, (the latter town being full twenty miles from his residence,) his letters to me contain the names of eight towns on the north side, from three to fourteen miles distant, which he took into his plan, and in several of which Societies were formed. In Stirling he found a class of twelve members, with a Serjeant Kelly as their leader and preacher, and on leaving the circuit these had increased to nineteen. All the other places have remained to this day unknown to the records of Methodism, though doubtless some fruit of his labours among them will appear in the great day.

Finding himself appointed to labour for a whole year in this almost solitary field, it is interesting to know in what spirit he entered upon his work. On September 19th, his private record informs us that he again solemnly devoted himself by covenant to God. The form of this engagement is very similar to that already recorded when in Port Glasgow. In it he deploras "the pride and unbelief of his heart, the weakness of his love to God, His word, and people, and to the unsaved world; his defective zeal, simplicity, self-denial, knowledge, meekness, fortitude, and godly sincerity." These confessions show how near the light he stood when he examined himself; for in most of these graces others believed him to excel. He proceeds to dedicate himself unreservedly to God, and earnestly prays, "O my God and King, curb my will whenever it would oppose Thine! Open up my way, and make me very useful in this circuit; and give me a place in the affections of the people. From this moment may I be faithful in Thy service, happy in Thy smile, strong in Thy strength, wise in Thy wisdom, and just in Thy righteousness. May I grow in grace, and in

the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, till I am purified throughout soul and body, and all Thy will wrought in me, and done by me. Then, O my All and in All, let me drop into Thy everlasting arms!" etc.

The year was destined, however, to be a period of trial, though not without some comfort. He lodged in the house of Mr. Robert Harley, a class-leader and local preacher. In the house, Mrs. Harley was like a mother to him; and of her husband he writes, "His heart is in the work. He is my fellow-labourer, and fellow-traveller to the country places, where he raises the tunes for me. I eat with the family. I have a room to myself. They receive ten shillings a week, for board, room-rent, coal, and candles. On the whole, I am pretty comfortable." This family was but in moderate circumstances, and were liberal almost beyond their ability. They are worthy to be had in remembrance, and doubtless they will have their reward.

My brother proceeds, "You ask, What are my prospects? *Ans.* In Dunfermline I am surrounded with blackness and darkness. To human appearance, the sale of the chapel is inevitable. The people have been so long expecting good days, and so often disappointed, that it is next to impossible to persuade them that they may yet rise to respect and prosperity. All our travelling and local preachers, with one exception, esteem it a cross, if not a curse, to spend a Sabbath here. They say, there is no hope; so that I have scarce one, at home or abroad, to hold up my hands. I feel often, when preaching and praying, as if one called aloud, 'This is not thy place.' Whether this comes from God, or the devil, or from the unbelief of my own heart, I am sometimes at a loss to determine; but one thing I know, I am like a man hung round with ponderous

weights. I have preached in the streets again and again, yet I know not if any good was done. On one of these occasions, a town-officer came with a design to seize me as a disturber of the peace. A friend, however, interposed, and I continued. He stood still until I had done, and then went away without saying a word. I felt as if God was present, and published that I should preach there again that night week. Meanwhile, I have gathered a little class of children, of which I have some hope."

December 8th.—"My prospects here, thank God, are brightening. Our congregations are a little improved, we have perfect peace among ourselves, and some whom I mentioned as drooping are revived. I have much pleasure in my young people, and my way is opening up to the beds of the sick and the dying. The giving up of a place, to me, is awful. O! there is much in saying, 'I am clear.' As it respects travelling, preaching frequently and faithfully, I think I am clear. But as it respects living to God in secret, and teaching from house to house, I am very deficient. My soul is bowed down within me under a sense of numberless defects; and I have to guard every day against an unfeeling and careless state of mind. My experience seems a mystery. I find in all my reading nothing analogous to it but in Wesley's Sermons on 'The First Fruits of the Spirit;' 'Sin in Believers;' and the 'Repentance of Believers.'"

March 20th, 1821.—"My health, thank God, is good, and my strength is unimpaired. My religious experience, however, bears too striking a resemblance to your own in the instances you mention. It is rather a state of mourning and desiring, than of delightful enjoyment and holy triumph. I have often to deplore an indisposition to close study and secret prayer, and to acts of

self-denial in general. Yet, glory be to God, when I struggle for the mastery, I generally prevail. Study then becomes fruitful, prayer is pleasant, and self-denial is easy. Since I wrote last, I have had some peculiarly refreshing seasons in private. God seemed to beset me behind and before, and to lay His hand upon me. My flesh trembled, while my spirit exulted in the hope of full and eternal salvation. But, alas! I did not prove faithful, and I have since had occasion to say, 'Why art Thou as a stranger, or as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?' Your observation that our feelings in the pulpit are not a proper standard for the measurement of our growth in grace, is just and valuable. It has often struck me, and is fully illustrated in Baxter's Reformed Pastor.

"As it respects *our* circuit on the Edinburgh side of the water, I can say but little; I believe they are getting on in a gradual manner. Last time I was over, I preached in Leith. In the evening many were made to say, 'How dreadful is this place!' While I was declaring that 'the wages of sin is death,' the voice of weeping was heard in several parts of the chapel, and one young woman went out, assisted by her friends, weeping aloud.

"*My* circuit here is still laborious, but it is beginning to wear a more promising aspect. Some are getting good in the town; and were it not for the desperate state of our chapel concerns, I believe this barren field would become as the garden of the Lord. I am of necessity much from home, and consequently my studies are greatly interrupted, my reading is disjointed, and my mind remains comparatively uncultivated. At this I am grieved, but I dare not sit at home while so many open doors invite me. My colleagues are blessed men. They begin to entertain more favourable

views of Dunfermline, but they are averse to long journeys. On this account my labours are the greater."

He concludes this letter with some references to his next year's field of labour. Several circuits presented an opening for him, if he should marry; he being now in the last year of his probation. He was not without some thoughts of changing his condition; but this, with all his personal and private concerns, was kept subordinate to providential guiding in his ministerial life, and he declined to encourage any of the proposals made to him.

In June, 1821, the President of the Conference, the Rev. Jabez Bunting, visited Edinburgh, and attended the District Meeting. On this occasion, the state of Methodism in Scotland was considered at large, including the affairs of the embarrassed chapels, and the number of ministers on certain circuits. As the Dunfermline people were willing to undertake the support of their minister for another year, it was agreed to recommend to the Conference that he should be continued. This rendered my brother's position for the ensuing year very uncertain. He would have preferred a removal; but he left his case entirely in the hands of his brethren, and the Conference deemed it proper that he should remain where he was.

After labouring through the following winter, he writes, April, 1822:—"As to my present experience I have much to be thankful for, and much whereof to be ashamed. I am daily weighed down with a sense of my ignorance, unfaithfulness, and unfruitfulness. I wonder that I am spared. Because Christ has died, I live; and because the Divine Goodness is infinite, I have hope. He loves me in His dear Son. In general I enjoy a sweet sense of His pacific presence. My soul often goes out in ardent longings after a brighter

discovery of His peerless glory, and a more enlarged acquaintance with the vast depths of His great salvation. I have derived much pleasure from the doctrine of Divine Providence. Whilst meditating on this subject, I have such sweet views of the sufficiency of God's power, the vastness of His love, the infinity of His wisdom, and the absolute rectitude of all His decisions, that I have been sweetly constrained to leave myself and all that concerns me completely in His hand, saying, without the least hesitation, 'Not my will, but Thine be done.' The world, with all its riches, honours, and gaieties, seems like a mere toy. My soul pants after exalted holiness and extensive usefulness, and I have a hope that there is a great increase of both in store for me. My visit to Edinburgh was both pleasant and profitable. The congregations were large. The word was blessed to myself and others. The power of God was peculiarly present in our prayer-meeting. We had a good missionary meeting, and a glorious love-feast. Not a minute was lost, and the experience was deep and Scriptural. Three professed to have received the blessing of perfect love. Many were stirred up to cry for a clean heart, and numbers are waiting for acceptance through the blood of the Lamb. We are expecting a great revival."

May 22nd.—"I have often such holy freedom at the throne of grace that time flies unperceived, and God seems to say, 'Ask and have whate'er you want.' O that He would every moment perfect His strength in my weakness!"

June 20th.—"My experience has not been so bright and comforting of late as I could have wished. Though I have had many animating views of the Father's love, and the sufficiency of the Son to save, though I have not been a stranger to fellowship with the Holy Spirit, yet I have also been the subject of

much grief. The lowness of the cause in this place, the unfruitfulness of my labours, and the awful forgetfulness of God manifested by the people of this town, have made me weep in secret. Were not the Divine mercy, goodness, and power boundless, with all the remaining sinfulness of my nature, and such imperfections in my life, I could not hope; but when I view the Father's love, and look at the Saviour's merit, I cannot despair. When God embraces me, He comes over mountains of guilt; when He smiles, it is through clouds of unworthiness. It is all of grace, free, infinite grace. O! how I long for the happy hour when I shall be filled with the fulness of God! Amen! so come, Lord Jesus!"

These are the last records of his religious life in Dunfermline. He had been there now nearly two years and a half in the very early part of his ministry. He was isolated in a great degree from his colleagues. He had preached thrice every Sunday from the same pulpit forty Sundays in the year, besides all his week-day travelling and preaching; and all this in the face of much discouragement. It is seldom that a Methodist minister in his probation is so circumstanced; yet instead of sinking under his load, or expressing any regret that his stay there had been so long, or any impatient desire for a removal, he rather weeps in secret over the low state of God's cause, the prevailing ungodliness of the population, and the unfruitfulness of his labours among them. He sees the object of his coming to the place frustrated by causes over which he had no control, and that the people of his charge, from the same causes, must soon suffer the loss of a resident minister. All this deeply affects him. Yet his soul cleaves to God. With Him he maintains constant fellowship, and in Him he puts his trust. He

pants for higher degrees of holiness, and more extensive usefulness. He even exults in hope that a great increase of both is in store for him ; a hope which his Divine Master fulfilled in the future of his life. With all this before us, must it not be owned that he endured hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ ?

We have dwelt the longer on his time and labours in this place, because it was here that, apart from external aids, and from all the advantages of cultivated society, whether with his brethren in the ministry or his people, those talents were improved, those ministerial habits were formed and established, and that firmness and stability of character were acquired, which, by the blessing of God, laid the foundation of his useful, happy, and honourable life.

LETTERS WRITTEN WHILE IN DUNFERMLINE.

To a sincere Seeker of Salvation.

“DUNFERMLINE, April 18th, 1822.

“How wonderful are the ways of God to men ! Out of that which you viewed as the greatest evil which could befall you, He is likely to bring the greatest good with which He can bless you. I mark the progress of your religious experience with much pleasure. God is evidently preparing you for all the treasures of His grace. Hitherto He has delayed to satisfy your longing soul with His pardoning love, but His delays are not denials. No. He waits to be gracious ; that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly. He has come into our world wearing a servant's form, to die a malefactor's death. His name is Love. This truth shines in the dispensations of providence. It is the cause of redemption. It is experienced by all who believe : and it will soon be proved by you. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Believe that He died for you, that He pleads for you,

that He is now waiting to bless you. He 'came to seek and to save that which was lost.' 'Christ suffered, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.' He says, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Come, lay your burdened, helpless soul at your Saviour's feet. He is nigh. He pities you. He loves you. He says, 'What will ye that I shall do unto you?' Cry out, Lord, blot out my iniquities! Assure me of Thy love, enable me to call thee, 'My Lord and my God!' O Jesus, hear Thy handmaid's cry! Enter and quiet her troubled heart. Give her peace and joy through believing in Thy sacrifice. Enable her to sing, 'O Lord, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me!' Trust Him; O trust Him! Can you doubt His love? His willingness? His ability? His truth? You say, No, I cannot. He knocks for admission. He draws me to Himself. He shows His wounds. I am His.

'I yield, I yield,
I can hold out no more;
I sink, by dying love compell'd,
And own Thee conqueror.'

"If so, the blessing is yours. Are you now happy? Have you confidence in God? Do you sing,

'My God, I am Thine, What a comfort Divine,
What a blessing to know that my Jesus is mine'?

"Give God the glory; and hold fast the confidence whereto you have attained. Live by faith, and steadily resist every temptation to doubt and despondency. Give thanks continually, and let your song be, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour!'"

To One who had got into "Doubting Castle."

"EDINBURGH, June, 1822.

"I am sorry that you are still without a comfortable assurance of God's love. But you are in danger of

despising the *day of small and feeble things* : therefore I need to caution you. Is it not evident as noon-day that God has wrought a gracious work in your soul, whereof you should be glad ? Has he not made you to hate sin under all its guises, and caused you to love holiness in all its shades and varied forms ? Has He not shown you the emptiness of the creature to satisfy the cravings of an immortal spirit ? And though the view has been distant, has He not discovered Himself to you as an all-sufficient and satisfying Portion ? Has He not made you desire His great salvation more than your daily bread ? Has he not led you to prefer His will before your own ? and taught you to associate your happiness with the promotion of His glory ? Are not the means of grace, which were once tasteless and barren, now, generally speaking, profitable and pleasant ? Does not the Saviour, in whom you once saw no beauty that you should desire Him, now appear as the chiefest among ten thousand ? Does not that heart of which you were once ignorant, or thought very good, appear exceedingly vile ? Does not that Bible which you once considered very dull, now appear full of interest ? With all these evidences of a work of grace before your eyes, and many more might be enumerated, is it not *wonderful* that even the old Serpent could lead you to think for a moment that God had forsaken you ? These things afford a surer evidence that God loves you, than though an angel from heaven were to proclaim the fact nightly to your listening ears. I hope you do not ascribe these things to education, the peculiarities of your circumstances, or to your natural disposition. Education, etc., may do much ; but surely you should sing,—

‘O to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I’m constrained to be!’

“Are you not in danger of supposing that there is no peace unless it be perfect ; no joy unless it be unspeakable ; no light unless it be marvellous ? Or that we ought not to draw comfort from our assurance

unless it be *full*? These are very dangerous but common mistakes. Are not the dawn and the blaze of day of the same nature, only different in degrees of light? Nay, is not the dawn an infallible proof that noon is approaching? Does not God promise to visit us 'as the morning?' See Hosea vi. 3: 'Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning.' I conceive that the hope that keeps the penitent's head above the waves of despair, enabling him to cry, though with a faltering tongue, 'I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord,' is specifically the same as his, who, being fully assured of the love of God, triumphs in expectation of a crown of glory. Although the mourner cannot realize it, it is evident they have been produced by the same agent; are placed upon the same foundation; and, allowing for their different degrees of strength, they produce the same fruit. The partial peace and the broken confidence which enable the *tossed*, the *troubled*, to say, 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,' are as certainly the fruit of the Spirit, and evidences of God's love to that soul, as are that peace and confidence which calm every fear, resolve every doubt, and enable the happy possessor to recline every moment on the bosom of his Lord. Rejoice then, that, though it be not noon in your soul, it is dawn. 'The dayspring from on high hath visited' *you*. Though your peace does not enable you to meet the last enemy with an unhesitating step, yet it does help you to lay yourself at the feet of Jesus. Though you cannot rejoice that the work is finished, you can and ought to give thanks that it is begun. Though fear be not destroyed, hope is really created."

CHAPTER THIRD.

WALTHAM-ABBEY AND OTHER 'CIRCUITS.

At the London Conference of 1822 Mr. M'Owan was fully set apart to the work of the ministry, and appointed to the Waltham-Abbey circuit, to change with one of the preachers of the London East (or City-Road) circuit, every sixth Sunday. After the Conference he returned to Scotland, and at Banff married the younger daughter of the Rev. John Townsend, an eminently pious and acceptable Wesleyan minister. After his death, which took place at Cheetham Hill, Manchester, in 1818, Mrs. Townsend returned to Aberdeen, purposing to pass the remainder of her days among her relatives there. But on the marriage of the elder daughter to the writer, in 1819, she and her younger charge resumed the itinerancy; and until this time they had resided with us. Now, however, his wife's mother accompanied the youthful pair to their new circuit, and continued to live with one daughter or the other, according to her pleasure, until she peacefully closed her days with us in Northampton in 1836. The marriage of Peter M'Owan to Jane Townsend proved to be a long and happy union, and the following extract from the free outflowings of his heart at this interesting period will be read with pleasure.

“WALTHAM ABBEY, *September 13th, 1822.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,

“WHEN we parted your request was, that I should write as soon as I had gone over my circuit; but as I did not write from Aberdeen, and as I shall not get

to my utmost boundaries till the end of the month, I conceive it to be a duty to communicate to you such particulars respecting our journey, with our present circumstances and future prospects, as we have at command.

“Our journey from Banff to Aberdeen was very pleasing. The fanning breeze was refreshing, and the shining sun prevented us from feeling cold. We were alternately delighted with the fruitful fields, the towering hills, the shady wood, the running stream, and variegated sky. The way, indeed, appeared short, while we conversed about the Maker of all, and His wonderful ways to men in general, but to us in particular. We, however, frequently felt considerable regret, as we reflected that the same motion that carried us to our home increased our distance from you. Again and again, we joined in analysing your feelings, and in guessing at your sentiments in reference to our departure. We got to Aberdeen about six o'clock, and were cordially received by Mrs. Alexander Thomson * and her family. When we left, they all accompanied us to the vessel, and throughout they appeared rather to be serving themselves than us.

“We got over the bar by half-past three P.M., and by six were all heartily sick. I was not nearly so ill as either mother or Jane. The steward was kind, and the passengers were agreeable. The wind was westerly,

* Mrs. Thomson was the widow of one of the three brothers of Mrs. Townsend, who were all captains of merchant vessels belonging to Aberdeen. James, the eldest, sailed on a second voyage for the season to North America, and neither vessel nor crew were ever heard of. Alexander, the husband of the lady mentioned above, died in Jamaica, November 18th, 1815, when about to return from a voyage to the West Indies. And John, the youngest, with most of his men, fell victims to fever, when on a voyage to Western Africa. The deaths of the three brothers occurred within a few years of each other. They were all exemplary members of the Methodist Society. An interesting memoir of Alexander appeared in the “Methodist Magazine” for June, 1818.

and drove us on at a good rate, so that we were on the whole as comfortable as could be expected. On Sunday morning about eight o'clock we anchored in the Thames, and without stopping in London we rode out to Waltham Abbey. When we arrived, the friends were met in the chapel. The key of the house was soon procured, and we entered our dwelling in the name of the Lord. After looking at the several apartments, we knelt down and gave God thanks, imploring, at the same time, His continued presence and blessing. The house will afford suitable accommodation: my study is a comfortable place; the window looks into a fine fruitful garden. Our furniture is new, and rather choice. We have no garden, but our back wall is ornamented with a fine spreading vine, that has been loaded with grapes this season, but only a few clusters have been left to regale us. On the whole, we are well pleased with our dwelling.

"Being much fatigued, I did not meet the people till the evening. I believe all felt it good to be there. The chapel, though small, was not full. Last night we had a good congregation, and such an influence rested on us, as encouraged us to hope that God would bless, and make us a blessing.

"The country around is delightful. There is an abundant and pleasing variety of wood and water, of hill and dale. Most of the fields are devoted to pasturage, and the soil appears to be rich. The town contains about three thousand five hundred inhabitants, mostly poor, and, I fear, very wicked, and ignorant of the things belonging to their eternal peace. Methodism is very low, both in town and country. The Independents are the chief Dissenters in these parts. Our people for the most part are poor, but they are very kind; many of them have called on us, and have given us fine specimens of English frankness. I have seen most of our leaders and local preachers, and must say, they appear to be men of an excellent spirit. Notwithstanding all these pleasing matters, I feel myself a stranger among them; yet I have a comfortable hope

that He who guided Israel will guide me, and that He who has said, 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord,' will sustain me. We have all enjoyed excellent health since we came, but we all feel it a trial to be so far separated from you. With united love to you and your little ones,

"I remain," etc.

After spending two years happily and usefully at Waltham-Abbey, he was appointed in 1824 to the London East Circuit, with the venerable John Gaulter as his Superintendent. His pen is silent respecting his public ministrations here; but he appears to have made considerable progress in the divine life.

"Poplar, December 7th, 1824."—Under this date, he writes in his diary: "This day has been spent in meeting the classes. I renewed the tickets of eight, and the great majority of the members testified that the last quarter had been unusually profitable. I was able to declare that God had also revived His work in my soul. I felt more dead to the world and the praise of men, and Christ is much more precious to me than He was. My love to His people is also greatly increased.

"Monday, 15th.—I heard of a poor man, a Roman Catholic, who was awakened on Sunday, while I was preaching from 1 Tim. iv. 8. May the good Lord pardon and save his soul!

"January 18th, 1825.—Visited Mr. B——'s bereaved family. Found it good to weep with them that weep. He is the fifth who has died in Poplar since the Conference, happy in God. I rejoice, that I have in some small degree, under God, smoothed the bed of death to each."

February 4th, 1825, he writes to me, "The work of conversion goes on in our circuit. In several of our

meetings the Lord has of late poured out His Spirit abundantly : a considerable number have found peace with God ; and many believers have been stirred up to plead for a clean heart. I thank God, that amid these showers my own soul has not remained unwatered and dry. I know more than ever what it is to ‘ abide in Christ ;’ I see Him in all things, and can worship Him in all places. Yet this is accompanied with such an abiding sense of my poverty, weakness, and unprofitableness, that I freely own,

‘ I nothing have, I nothing am,
Excluded is my every boast,
My glory swallow’d up in shame.’

My temptations continue ; nay, I think they have increased in number, variety, and vehemence. But in them all my Saviour

‘ Keeps me to prove
His utmost salvation, His fulness of love.’”

This was speedily followed by his obtaining the blessing of entire sanctification. A letter which he received from a friend on the subject, led him to seek it with greater earnestness than he had hitherto done. On replying to it he says :—

“ Your letter came with the blessing of the eternal God. The pointed inquiries you made respecting my experience were sent home by the Holy Ghost. I gave diligence to know myself ; and the result was shame and self-abasement, accompanied with strong cries for the entire renewal of my nature. About the same time it [the letter] arrived, I began to meet in band with Mr. B——, of the South circuit, and this also helped me forward. I shall not detail the various excuses and temptations which followed ; but would state, to the honour and glory of Divine grace, that on Thursday,

February 21st, while at our meeting, we were favoured with an extraordinary baptism of the Holy Spirit. His descent was preceded by an overwhelming sense of our weakness, poverty, and sinfulness. Its effects were an inexpressible calm, and a confidential resting in Christ as all our salvation and all our desire. Our consciousness of weakness in ourselves was great, but we could say, 'The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song.' We felt 'the speechless awe that dares not move;' we knelt in silence. We stood up before the Lord. We sat down. We were assured that God had done great things for each of us; but for a considerable time we had no power to make it a subject of conversation. After we parted the fire continued to burn; and still it continues to burn. All glory be to God! My temptations since have been violent and various; but God is as a wall of fire about me, and Satan's fiery darts are quenched. I never was more sensible of my nothingness, yet it gives me no trouble; for the strength of Christ is made perfect in my weakness. I feel that every thing which distinguishes me from the beast and devil is from God, and I give Him the glory. I dwell in God, and He dwells in me. The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God. All things work together for my good. This baptism of the Holy Spirit which I have received, instead of superseding study, fits me for, and impels me the more to, it. I often come short, and must fall under condemnation for these shortcomings, were it not for the atonement of Jesus Christ, on which I feel that I can constantly rely."

In the spring of 1826 he writes again to me: "We have scarce begun to talk about next year's appointment; but my mind has long since been made up to quit London at Conference. I trust God will keep me

in His love, and make me useful till that time, and then I will bless Him for a removal. I do not regret that I came: I believe I have hitherto been in my place, but many things conspire to satisfy me that a change will then be best."

In accordance with his wishes, at the Conference of 1826 he was removed from London, and was appointed to Manchester South (Grosvenor Street), with Messrs. Jabez Bunting as his Superintendent and John Waterhouse as second preacher; being associated in the following year with Messrs. Richard Watson, John Hannah, and William M. Bunting. Here he laboured with his usual faithfulness, energy, and success; and ever after, during their lives, was honoured with the friendship of his distinguished colleagues.

While on this circuit he preached the afternoon sermon at the opening of the Irwell-Street chapel, Salford. His text was, "I am not mad, most noble Festus," etc. (Acts xxvi. 25.) Of this sermon the Rev. John Rattenbury has said, "The word was accompanied with mighty power. There was more weeping under that sermon," caused by thorough religious feeling, than he had "ever seen in his life. There was not a countenance that was not moved." And it may be observed, that in his most impassioned pulpit exercises, the most sober-minded of his brethren were free to acknowledge that nothing ever fell from his lips unworthy of the place he occupied, or inconsistent with the sacredness and dignity of Christian truth.

To one who had lost the Witness of God's forgiving Love.

"MANCHESTER, February 9th, 1828.

"DEAR MISS S——,

"THE unspeakable loss which your soul has sustained, fills me with deep regret. But I sorrow not as

those who have no hope, for in your case there are signs of a speedy recovery. You have done well to give me an opportunity of uniting my supplications with yours for the return of the light of your Heavenly Father's countenance. It is one of Satan's stratagems to get the inexperienced to hide their spiritual maladies from those who are likely to assist in delivering them, by advice or otherwise. You have, however, broken the snare, and I hope God will soon fill you with His great salvation.

"You will be exposed to many temptations to doubt the possibility of your recovery. But to all such temptations you must oppose the character, the oath, the invitations, the promises, and the past dealings of God with all penitent offenders. See Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7; Psalm ciii. 8-14; Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Isai. lv.; Heb. viii. 10-12; Psalm cviii.; throughout Hosea xiv. Knowing the supreme efficacy of God's Word, I choose rather to direct your attention to it on this subject, than to occupy your attention and time with any feeble reasonings of my own; and I would earnestly recommend to you a frequent and prayerful use of these and similar passages of Scripture.

"Another point on which Satan will endeavour to lead you into error, is that of waiting for something to fit you for, or in some way to recommend you to, the Lord Jesus. The pride of our hearts disposes us to attempt something of this kind, even whilst our judgments are convinced that it must be fruitless, and perhaps nothing forms such an effectual bar to prevent penitents from the rest of faith. I pray God that my dear young friend may not only see that such attempts are vain, but be enabled to cease from them, and come to Jesus as she is. He is the Author, as well as the Finisher, of faith. He worketh in us both to *will* and to do of His good pleasure. He *proclaims* and *bestows* liberty. Yea, he opens the prison-doors to them that are bound; and by the atonement He has made in their behalf, He delivers them out of the pit where there is no water. The weary secure rest by coming to Him. The guilty are pardoned through

believing in Him, and the gross darkness which covers our minds is dispelled by the Sun of Righteousness shining into our hearts.

‘Sinners, obey the heavenly call ;
Your prison-doors stand open wide ;
Go forth, for He hath ransom’d all,
For every soul of man hath died.
‘Tis His the drooping soul to raise,
To rescue all by sin oppress,
To clothe them with the robes of praise,
And give their weary spirits rest.’

“He is our Life, and he that believeth in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Being fully persuaded of this, Paul promised even the jailer of Philippi instant salvation, if he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. ‘If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved.*’

“Stay not then for deeper sorrow, nor for clearer views of sin, or of the way of salvation ; nor for a stronger desire, nor for more liberty in prayer, or freedom in confession. But come as you are ; come, lost and unsaved ; come and find all these—with pardon, peace, holiness, and heaven—in Christ. Come and prove for yourself that ‘of God’ He ‘is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.’ I abstain from lengthening this exhortation, lest I should darken God’s counsel by words of man’s wisdom. The more you cease from man, and betake yourself to God in Christ, the sooner will the struggle terminate. Rise early in the morning, that you may secure time for waiting upon God in prayer, and for searching the Scriptures, before the business of the day commences, and it will not be long ere He returns, and leaves a blessing behind Him.

“I remain,

“Your sincere friend,

“PETER M’OWAN.”

In 1828 he removed to Leeds West, where he received a hearty welcome, and engaged with his usual earnestness in calling sinners to repentance, and in urging believers to press forward to higher degrees of holiness. His labours in connection with the Mission cause were also blessed by God to the salvation of souls. In writing home from Halifax, he says, "Yesterday morning we had rather an unusual time in the chapel. I have heard of three persons who found peace with God." But here he laboured beyond his strength, and was obliged for a season to retire to Harrogate for rest and a change of air. Attentive also to his spiritual health, he writes from thence: "My soul has been blest with some refreshing seasons since I came. My mind is more free from distraction, and I find it easier to prolong my seasons of intercourse with God than for some time past."

The following is part of a letter which he wrote to a young lady he met with during this visit to Harrogate.

"DEAR MISS H——,

"It was with sincere pleasure I heard from Mrs. M'OWAN of your desire to receive a few lines from me, which might serve as a memento of our brief intercourse with each other. Under the first impulse I wrote a letter, requesting you to inquire into the safety of your state in reference to God and eternity. But on reading it over I laid it aside, thinking I might have mistaken Miss H——'s case, and if so, I should only give her unnecessary pain, and fill her with causeless alarm, which would be a cruel return for the deep and affectionate concern which she manifested for my welfare while I stayed at Harrogate. I also hoped that some theme more pleasing to both of us might suggest itself to my mind, and furnish me with an opportunity of gratifying your wishes without the risk of wounding your feelings. But after waiting till, I fear, your patience is nearly exhausted, the considera-

tion that we may never meet till the trumpet shall summon us to the judgment-seat, induces me to prefer sending the substance of what I wrote the day after my return. If I have mistaken your case, if you have, indeed, 'passed from death to life,' then I am sure your charity will excuse the *act* for the *motive* which gave it birth; and should my fears turn out to be well founded; should you find, upon examination, that you are 'yet in the flesh,' (Rom. viii. 8, 9,) then, whether you accuse me *now* or not, I know you will thank me when 'the Sun of Righteousness shall arise' upon you 'with healing in His wings,' which I have a lively hope He will do, sooner or later.

"My journey to Harrogate was undertaken in the spirit of prayer. The blessings for which I chiefly prayed were, that my health might be established; that my personal piety might be deepened; and that I might be made a blessing to Mrs. Jackson, her dear children, and such visitors as she might have during my stay. Amongst others I found you under her hospitable roof, and the few fragments of your history, which I gleaned partly from Mrs. J——, and partly from yourself, made me feel a more than ordinary interest in you. I soon perceived that you had a strong regard for religion and for religious people, and that hypocrisy was most abhorrent to your mind. I was often exhilarated by your pleasantry and edified by your conversation. Many of your sentiments and remarks indicated considerable acquaintance with the theory of true religion; yet the abiding conviction upon my mind was, that you had not experienced its power, that your heart was not established with grace, and that you had not dedicated yourself to God, your great Proprietor and Redeemer. Well aware that wit and personal attractions are dangerous when the heart is not devoted to God, that talents are never so properly applied as when consecrated at the shrine of piety, and influenced by a desire for your spiritual and eternal welfare, I would ask, Is God the supreme delight and the satisfying portion of your soul? (Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26.) Is the life which you now live a life of

faith in the Son of God? (Gal. ii. 20.) Have you the Spirit of Christ dwelling in you? not only the meek and lowly mind, which was in Christ, but the Holy Spirit, making all things new? (Rom. viii. 9-15; 2 Cor. v. 17.)

"I can rely upon your candour for faithful answers to these questions, if the gaiety of your disposition does not prevent you from giving them a serious consideration. Few earthly things would give me more heartfelt pleasure than hearing you answer them in the affirmative. But I have my fears. I fear that, notwithstanding your frankness, kindness, and native generosity, you will find *TERREL* written upon your soul. I fear you have only to search, in order to find that the love of Christ is not the ruling principle of your life,—that the glory of God is not your *chief aim*. Yes, I fear, Miss H——, you will find upon examination that you are *unconverted*, and consequently unfit to meet God. You will not imagine that I write thus under an impression that I am perfect. No: if I differ in any particular from the meanest and basest of our race, it is entirely attributable to almighty grace. I was once 'afar off;' 'without God;' 'a lover of pleasure;' 'a friend of the world;' 'a Pharisee;' 'a child of wrath;' 'dead in trespasses and sins;' and

'Long my imprison'd spirit lay,

'Fast bound in sin and nature's night;'

but by the application of the truth by the Spirit my slumbers were broken, and by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ I found rest to my soul. By treading in His steps I now have peace,—peace unspeakable; and I am animated by a cheering hope of future glory.

"I wish you to possess all this, and not only do I desire it, but angels and God vehemently long to see you in possession of this 'pearl of great price.' In order that *you* might be saved, the Son of God left the regions of glory, and the bosom of the Father; for *you* He became 'an Infant of days,' 'a Man of sorrows,' 'a curse,' a victim to Divine justice; for *you* He

bled, groaned, agonized, and died; and having died, He rose again, and ever liveth to intercede for *you* at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He is 'exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins:' He is 'the Resurrection and the Life: He that believeth in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' He is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'

During his residence in Leeds, he also paid a visit to his relatives in Crieff. Some extracts from a letter which he sent me after his return will be found interesting.

"WHILE passing through Dunfermline, though it was day, I saw only two or three persons whom I knew, so soon do we become strangers in a populous town. This, together with the wreck which Methodism has suffered here, made me quite melancholy till we reached Gleneagles, (the pass through the Ochil Hills.) when I was roused by the sight of the lovely vale of Strathearn, bounded, as you well know, by the Grampian mountains on the west and north, and by the hill of Kinnoul on the east. My eye searched eagerly for the winding Earn, which I knew ran in the centre; but it was hid by woods and rising grounds, except near the old castle of Innerpaffray, where it emerged like a broad mirror illumined by the setting sun. The town of Crieff appeared distinctly, smiling on the side of its own hill, and by the help of some ancient landmarks, I was able to single out, as I thought, the side of my father's house. The Knock hill, with its hardy firs, through which you and I have often strolled, rose behind, very little altered in its general appearance, while Callum's hill on the right was so stripped of its beautiful wood, that I could see Ferntower (Sir David Baird's house) over its summit. I cannot describe the effect which this fine interesting scene had upon my feelings when it first burst on my view. I had an intelligent fellow-traveller with me on the top of the coach, who had all along spoken to me as if I were a

stranger in that part of the country ; and being rather gloomy, I was content to be considered as such. But this prospect brought out the secret that I was a native of Crieff.

"I was a good deal affected while passing through Muthill, to see the naked walls and broken arches of the old kirk, in which I have so often worshipped God with great delight, and in which I have so often heard Mr. Russell preach with so much power. The new kirk is large and elegant ; but the sight of it gave me no pleasure, for I could not help thinking that the contentions to which the building of it gave birth in all probability hastened Mr. Russell's death.

"The bridge of Earn, as we enter the town, is just *where* it used to be, and I believe just *as* it used to be ; but it appeared to me much narrower, and the river much less, than they once were. Indeed, all the houses in the town appeared lower, and the streets shorter, than I had conceived them to be. The meadow had not half the beauty or extent which were formerly associated with it in my mind. I confess that I was unable to survey the new square, the Masons' lodge, or even the old square, with those feelings of pleasure and veneration which I can well remember they once excited.

"The coach stopped at Robinson's Inn : and the first person who appeared to recognize me was *Sandy the Dummy*. He offered his services to carry my trunk, which I accepted. When we had got a little on the way to our parent's house, he began to make some of his strange noises ; and looking round, I saw him pointing to a woman who was meeting us, but whom I had not observed ; but on getting a little nearer I perceived *my mother* ! You cannot conceive the degree of joy which the poor dumb lad manifested when he saw us salute each other. He attended all the sermons I preached ; and sometimes when the people were more than ordinarily affected, he started up, and looked as if he felt the general impulse. I am

happy to say, he is now sober, and kind to his mother.*

“I do not know that I can communicate any thing new about our parents. Father is now incapable of close application to his work, and can do nothing without his spectacles ; and mother’s sight is very bad, though she still performs her usual domestic duties. Some time ago, Mr. L——, the new parish minister, called at their house in the course of his pastoral visitation, when the following conversation took place between him and mother, who was alone with brother James. *Minister*. I understand you have a son who is a Methodist preacher. *Mother*. Yes, Sir, thank God, I have two. *Min*. I don’t like their tenets. They are very bad. *Mo*. I like them and their tenets too. *Min*. Are you a Methodist then ? *Mo*. No ; but it is because there is no Society in the town. *Min*. And do you believe their doctrines ? *Mo*. Yes ; and I think them the doctrines of the Bible. *Min*. Do you go to my church ? *Mo*. Yes, as often as it is convenient. *Min*. As often as it is convenient ! What does that mean ? *Mo*. Why, as often as health and family affairs will permit. *Min*. And do you take the Sacrament from me ? *Mo*. Yes. *Min*. I could prevent that. I could stop you. *Mo*. Nay, you cannot. There is not one in your parish that can say to Mary M’Owan, ‘Black is your e’e,’ (eye, a proverbial expression,) and you are the first that ever spoke to me in this manner. I wish you were like the Methodist preachers I have had the pleasure of knowing, then we should have the kirk better filled. Mr. L——, not being prepared for such an address as this, very quickly made his retreat.

“Although Methodism no longer exists in an organized form in Crieff, its effects are still visible there, and in adjacent places. While Mr. Heape

* Sandy was a poor inoffensive dumb lad, who lived with his widowed mother, and partly supported himself by what he got for occasional services that fell in his way. His character is finely brought out in the above anecdote.

resided in Crieff, there was a young man of the name of Bennett, who got good under his ministry. Leaving Crieff he went to Muthill, where he joined Mr. Russell's private class. When Mr. R. was on his death-bed, he sent for young Bennett, and one of his elders, and gave the class and Sunday-school into their hands till he should recover, or, in case of his death, till a new minister should be appointed to the parish. Mr. Russell died, and his successor, being a man of a very different spirit, soon broke up the class, and ejected Bennett from the school, because he would exhort the adults who crowded to hear his concluding address to the scholars. Being expelled from the school he collected a few children into his lodging on a Sunday evening, intending nothing more than *their* instruction. As soon as this was known, the people begged for admission, till finally, he had to hire the Masons' Lodge, where he now, as a kind of cover to his proceedings, teaches the children for a short time, and then preaches to the adults, who throng the place to excess. The minister is sadly mortified, but good is evidently done; and he has not hitherto dared to interfere.

"Archibald Campbell, another of our Crieff members, who removed some years ago to Glen-Lyon, has also been made a great blessing in a similar way."

Before returning home from this visit, in a letter to Mrs. M'Owan, he says, "Yesterday I preached with considerable enlargement to large congregations. In the evening the place was crowded long before the time of service. To-day I go to Perth, seventeen miles, and intend to preach in the evening. To-morrow I return, and shall conclude my intercourse with my townsmen by preaching at night. I am not without hope that my visit will be made a blessing to some of my old acquaintances."

After the Conference of 1830 he removed to Hull, Mr. Edmund Grindrod being the Superintendent, and

Mr. Thomas Squance his other colleague. The following year they were joined by the amiable Mr. W. L. Thornton, as an additional minister. Soon after his arrival he writes to me of the birth of his only son, as follows :—

“You will rejoice to know that on Sunday morning last my dear Jane was safely delivered of a fine boy. May he live, and prove a vessel of honour fit for the Master’s use! His mother continues to do well, and has the prospect of a safe and speedy recovery. My own health has been pretty good; and with the exception of one or two slight attacks, I have been free from the affection in my chest of which I complained when in Leeds.

“Our prospects in the circuit are very fair. During the September visitation I found the members in the classes which I met, generally in a safe, though not in a joyful or triumphant, state. We have, however, some who openly and consistently profess to enjoy the blessing of perfect love; many more are earnestly seeking it. And I have, at times, felt considerable freedom in urging them to leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and to go on to perfection. Our last fast-day was a memorable time. We were at some pains to instruct our people in the nature of the duty, and the result showed that the labour was not in vain. At the morning and noon prayer-meetings we had about two hundred persons present, and in the evening not fewer than seven hundred. The power and presence of God was with us in public and private, and we still reap the blessed effects of that day.

“The friends here hold the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper in great estimation. We administered it in all our three chapels on the same day; and on the last two communion Sundays we have had from seven to eight hundred communicants. The trade of the town is peculiarly favourable for week-evening services, and the people make the best of that circumstance. In Waltham-Street chapel, on Monday evening, our con-

gregation amounts to from four to five hundred persons. In George-Yard, on Thursday evening, from three to four hundred, and in Scott-Street, on Wednesday, upwards of two hundred. In our school-rooms in the suburbs we have from forty to eighty. Indeed, such week-night congregations I have not seen in London, Manchester, or Leeds. Our Sunday congregations are on the increase, and to their praise be it spoken, the bulk of them come in time to commence the service. As you might expect, from these fair preliminaries, we have real good done; sinners are awakened and penitents are comforted. Take it all in all, I do not know a circuit in the Methodist Connexion where a willing workman may be more useful, or more comfortable, in his work than in this.

“I have finished and forwarded the sermon I promised for Mr. Ward’s volume. The text is Heb. xi. 7. I can only hope that it will serve as a foil to its fellows, and shall not be greatly surprised if the editor should throw it aside as unworthy of them. The Rev. Thomas Jackson is to edit the volume, and I have given him full power to prune and polish, if he thinks it capable of being made fit for the public eye, or otherwise to suppress it altogether.”

Of the sermon just mentioned, which appears to have been his first production for the press, it will be seen hereafter that Mr. Jackson speaks in a very different manner.

In the year 1831 he was invited to take part in the Anniversary Services of the Missionary Society in London. The Annual Meeting was this year held in Exeter Hall for the first time. Before leaving London he wrote me an interesting account of it, which I postpone in favour of an account furnished by the Rev. Dr. Hoole, which will be found further on.

Under date of December 20th, 1831, he writes to me as follows:—

“WE felt greatly obliged by your last. It made me ashamed, and put me upon resolves to do better in future. We rejoice, that through the kind providence of God, we can still report, ‘All’s well.’ The family enjoy pretty good health, and our town is hitherto saved from the cholera now so dreadfully spreading in the country. I am not without hope that we shall be preserved. The shaking of the rod at a distance has certainly produced a change in the manners and habits of the people. The congregations at the different places of worship are increased, and we have instituted two special meetings for intercession, both of which are well attended. Drunkenness and Sabbath-breaking are diminishing evils; and as for our theatre, it is nearly abandoned. It will hold near three thousand people, but they have had to close their doors for several nights for want of an audience. The manager is full of wrath. He says that the neglect with which he is treated is unprecedented in the history of the stage; and he has published his intention to quit the town as soon as his players shall have had their benefits.

“January 25th, 1832.—I ought to have informed you long since, that your letter of compliance with the invitation of the stewards gave to all parties much pleasure. They regard it as a settled matter till Conference. We have had a good many souls brought in since the new year commenced. There is a general quickening in the Society, and our chapels are filled with attentive hearers; so that we are looking for still brighter days. Our intercession-meeting on Friday, at noon, continues to be well attended, and the presence of God is so powerfully felt that some of the most pious people in the Church, and among the Dissenters, regularly attend. Our preservation from the scourge in this exposed town, excites the surprise of the most thoughtless, and strengthens the faith of the truly righteous. Our docks are crowded with ships from

the Baltic ports, as well as from Sunderland, Newcastle, and Shields, where it so greatly prevails. Yet we are preserved. Glory be to God!

“February 29th, 1832.—We deeply sympathize with you and your afflicted Christiana under your late bereavement; and we have not failed to commend your case to the compassionate care of Him who has said, ‘Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.’ Your dear little Jane is exalted to the complete enjoyment of that pure felicity which we are endeavouring to secure for ourselves, and the children whom God hath spared to us. You have now two babes in heaven. A sweetly melancholy thought! What higher boon can we crave at the hands of Him who is the great God our Saviour, than that we, our wives, and our children, may be, in His good time, permitted to join them. I feel, more than ever, the anxieties of a parent; and though our little ones are generally dutiful and loving, yet the fear lest any of them should disgrace religion, and lose their souls, often makes my heart ache, and the tear gather in my eye, while I look on them seated round our table, or enjoying their childish sports. The task of training them is awfully difficult, and the possibility of injuring them by being too lenient or too severe, is very great. It is, however, cause of great rejoicing that God has promised us His aid in this, as well as in every other good work; and thus it becomes our duty to sow in hope, though it may be sometimes, also, in tears. Mrs. Townsend* appeared much pleased with the thought that you would lay your little Jane in her grandfather’s grave.

“I am happy to inform you that we now enjoy the signs of a revival. During the last five or six weeks we have had many awakenings, and last Tuesday night, at one of our special prayer-meetings, nine persons found peace. Our Friday noon meetings

* Paralysis had rendered her speechless, and otherwise helpless, five years before this time.

increase in interest, and our vestry, which will hold near two hundred, is crowded."

We may here state that the dreaded cholera made its appearance in Hull during the summer of 1832; but there was ground for thankfulness that the visitation was light as compared with what several towns in the north of England suffered, and it soon passed away.

As was his practice in other places, he preached frequently in the streets of Hull, and called upon the careless to seek the Lord, and attend His ordinances. These labours appear to have been made peculiarly useful; for he had occasion frequently to remark, that for years after he met with persons who told him that these out-door services were the means of their conversion to God.

He had hitherto, for various reasons, preferred remaining only two years in his circuits, but the pressing requests of the Hull friends prevailed in persuading him to continue a third year with them; and to him, as well as to them, it proved a year of much enjoyment and profit. With his colleagues he saw the work of God quietly, but powerfully, advance, and many precious souls continued to be brought to the knowledge of the Saviour. During this year, also, the two brothers had their comfort increased by labouring together in the same field.

While on a missionary deputation in 1832, he wrote home from Loughborough:—

"I HAVE heard of a young clergyman in this neighbourhood, who is, in many respects, a second Mr. Fletcher. To a sound conversion he adds a child-like simplicity of manner, indefatigable diligence in the discharge of his pastoral duties, and a brotherly affection to the ministers and members of our Society. He even occasionally teaches in our Sunday-schools, and

openly avows, that in his opinion, Methodism has done more good in reforming and benefiting the nation than all the other systems put together. Both local and travelling preachers are welcome to his house, and with his purse he assists our schools, etc."

While on another tour he preached at Nottingham, on a Sunday, and one of the sermons was instrumental in the conversion of a young lady. She supped at the house where he lodged, but her distress was so great, she was unable to remain in the room, and left abruptly, followed by a female friend, who was aware of her state of mind. In an adjoining room they prayed, and the Lord lifted up the light of His countenance upon her. Her husband, who was once a Methodist, was also stirred up again to seek rest for his soul in Jesus.

Ministers of the Gospel are frequently encouraged by written communications from those who have been benefited by their ministry. Among several received by him at this time, the following is worthy of record:—

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I KNOW not how to address you, unless I may be allowed the privilege of calling you my father in Christ; for until I first heard you preach in Waltham-Street chapel I knew not what a great sinner I was. Not being profane or immoral in my conduct, I thought I stood as good a chance of heaven as the rest of mankind. The Holy Spirit made your words have a powerful influence on my heart, which led to deep conviction of sin. I do not remember the text, because, when I came into the chapel I was as vain, light, and trifling as any girl, though I had been a wife ten years; so the text and sermon were but little noticed by me, until it pleased God to fix my attention on you at the time when your very soul appeared to be in your every word. I imagined you fastened your eyes on me as you uttered this solemn appeal, 'This

day I set before you life and death, therefore choose life; but if you prefer death, your blood be upon your own head. I clear my soul of the blood of every one of you in the presence of God.' If a thousand arrows had pierced me through that moment, the wound could not have been more severe. I can say, 'The pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.' After the service some friends invited me to Mr. Procter's class. I went, and heard one after another rejoicing in the love of God. I was in misery and wretchedness for nearly nine months. I followed you from chapel to chapel. I rested not day or night, and gave vent to the sorrow of my heart in tears, groans, and sighs. I could not believe that any of the promises in the Word of God were for me, and my feeble prayers appeared to be of no avail. The first Sunday in the new year I attended the Covenant Service, and felt the solemnity of promising to be the Lord's fully. In this solemn act I felt a ray of Divine light shine into my sin-sick soul, and the Lord gave me a degree of confidence in Him, but I could not fully rely on Jesus. At night I heard Mr. Thornton preach in Wesley Chapel upon taking Christ to be our Prophet, Priest, and King. I felt I could do this. I was sure there was nothing I wanted more than Christ in earth or heaven. The Lord gave me power to lay hold of Him by faith, and in my closet devotions I was assured of my acceptance in the Beloved. It is my earnest prayer that I may be kept faithful unto death, and meet you at the right hand of that Redeemer who has done so much for me. I hope, Sir, you will pardon this liberty.

"I remain, yours, etc.

"M. W."

The following, entitled "A FRAGMENT," merits insertion here:—

" 'Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.' (Lev. xix. 17.)

"Some time before my appointment to the Hull

circuit I was travelling with a friend in a stage coach from London to Burslem. We were much annoyed by the profane language constantly uttered by a young man who was one of our fellow-passengers. My friend being the senior, I requested that he might reprove him; but he declined, saying, 'My dear Sir, it is through a want of ideas.' At last, being unable to endure it any longer, I requested the young man to explain some of the expressions he had just used to his companion. He attempted to make his words clear with another oath. I said, 'You, no doubt, wish to speak intelligibly; but it is impossible to comprehend you.' He then muttered something about the stupidity of some men, etc., but became much more guarded in his conversation. Late at night, when the coach stopped at an inn, the passengers alighted to take some refreshment. Whilst several of them were warming themselves at a large fire, this young man, in a defiant style, declared his belief, that with all the professions of sanctity which some people made, there was not a gentleman present who had not told a lie that day. Instantly a plain-looking man said, 'Sir, I wish you to understand that I cannot allow you to include me in such a charge. If you have been guilty of this sin, it is quite right you should acknowledge it; yet, with regard to myself, I hate such a practice.' I then added, 'I hope our young friend will remember that the Bible states, that "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," and if he does not repent he must dwell in that awful place.' The young man's companion then came up to me, and placing himself in a threatening attitude, demanded satisfaction for his friend, declaring that I had called him a liar, and it was not to be borne. I calmly replied; 'I am quite easy upon that head, as I am a servant of

God, and a minister of His Gospel; and I will not permit any one to blaspheme His name in my presence unreprieved.' The party soon after resumed their seats on the coach, and not another oath was uttered. On arriving at Burslem, the young man held out his hand to me on leaving, saying, 'I hope, Sir, we shall meet in a better place.' 'I have no hope of that,' I rejoined, 'unless you repent.' We then shook hands and parted. Some years after, when in the Hull circuit, a young man came to me in the vestry oné Sunday afternoon for a note of admission to a love-feast that was to be held in Waltham-Street chapel. He asked me if I recollected spending an hour at such an inn, on the road to Burslem. On replying that I did perfectly well, 'I am,' said he, 'the companion of the young man who acted so improperly on that occasion. He is a changed character, and a member of the Wesleyan-Methodist Society. He requested me, on visiting Hull, to take an opportunity of seeing you, and to say, how sorry he had been ever since for his conduct, and to beg your forgiveness.'"

CHAPTER FOURTH.

GLASGOW CIRCUIT.

FROM Hull, in 1833, he removed to Glasgow; where, on his arrival he found matters in an unpleasant state. The Conference had found it necessary to unite Paisley and Greenock with the Glasgow circuit. Against this the stewards had strongly remonstrated, and finding the matter settled contrary to their views, they had resolved on adopting very serious measures, affecting the comfort of their ministers, and especially of himself, as the additional minister appointed on account of the change made. Of all this, he had been kept ignorant until his arrival in Glasgow. With some difficulty the Superintendent was persuaded to delay for a few weeks the printing and issuing of an address to the members of the Society, which he had prepared, calling upon them to increase their contributions in order to meet the additional expense now brought upon the circuit. Instead of this, an affectionate statement of the case, to be made by the ministers in meetings of the Society in the different chapels, was suggested, and adopted. The result was, that at the September Quarterly Meeting, the circuit debt was reduced from £26 to £10, after all expenses were met.

October, 14th, 1833, he writes, "Our Sunday congregations have considerably increased, and on week-evenings are at least doubled. We have framed a new and enlarged week-night plan, which, I hope we shall

be able to carry into efficient operation. Mr. Illingworth has been laid up for the last month by an attack of fever, which terminated in English cholera. This has retarded the prosecution of our plans; but he is now, I am happy to say, nearly recovered, and with his peculiar talents, will, under God, materially promote the work. Brother Chettle is in good health and spirits, and is very acceptable. On the whole, though I do not regret coming to Glasgow, my prospects of usefulness are not very bright, and my hopes concerning the revival of Methodism in Scotland are not very sanguine. For a series of years, our people, being generally poor and depressed and few in number, have ceased to carry on an aggressive warfare against the world, and seem as if they could content themselves by barely maintaining their ground."

The following letter, addressed to the late Rev. W. L. Thornton, is dated Glasgow, December 20th, 1833:—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"YOUR friendly and interesting letter deserved an earlier reply, and so I intended when it came; but I waited week after week, hoping to have more important information to communicate, and brighter prospects to describe. I regret to say, my hope is in a great degree, 'hope deferred,' and I begin to fear lest further delay should give to my friendship an air of suspicion in your eyes; a circumstance which I would exceedingly regret; for, from the beginning of our acquaintance, my soul clave to you as the soul of David to Jonathan.

"From my letters to my brother you would perceive that our prospects in Glasgow were not very bright. Though the general state of things remains much the same as when I last wrote, we have yet had some sound conversions, which have encouraged us greatly. Under the first sermon I preached in the circuit, God spoke peace to one mourning soul, and a backslider was

awakened under the same discourse. A few weeks ago an old man, nearly seventy years of age, found peace in one of our prayer-meetings; his case is rather singular. His parents were amongst the first Methodists in Glasgow, and Mr. Wesley generally visited them when he came to this city. Their admonitions and good example were, however, lost upon him; and after grieving them in various ways, he entered the army. He served in the East and West Indies, in America, at the Cape of Good Hope, and in the Peninsular war. He was at Waterloo, and after that dreadful day he obtained his discharge, with a pension of fifteen pence per day. With only very brief seasons of compunction he lived without God, and without hope in the world, until about three months ago, when he was seized by a fear of death, accompanied by an undefined consciousness of guilt. As a means of obtaining relief, he gave up the use of beer and spirits, and not finding this effectual, he resolved to read a chapter of the Bible daily. This failing, he read two chapters, and added a little prayer, not doubting that God would now be gracious. His burden increased more and more, notwithstanding all his endeavours to get rid of it, and the hardy veteran wept to think he was lost, and that he could not save himself. One hope, however, remained. 'My parents,' said he, 'were Methodists: they prayed for my salvation. I will go to the Methodists; perhaps they may help me in my distress.' He attended our ministry for two successive Sabbaths, and had his convictions of sin so much deepened, and his mind so far enlightened, as to discover that even the Methodists could not save him, and that nothing short of the power and grace of God could reach his case. During the afternoon of the third Sunday he was in an agony, and came to the conclusion that his case was hopeless, and that it was useless to go any more to hear sermons. Looking on some of the junior members of his family, he said, 'If I must go to hell these youngsters need not; they, no doubt, may be saved.' And, for their benefit alone, he

resolved to go once more to the house of God. Under the sermon that evening he saw a small door of hope, as he afterwards told us, that widened and widened, till it became so wide that it appeared large enough to admit him, sinner as he was. In the prayer-meeting which followed, he said, 'I saw the Lord Jesus standing in this door, beckoning me to come, and while I looked, He said, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." And with that I said, Lord Jesus, I come, sinner as I am. And He did take me in, and He has made me young again.' The poor old man, on obtaining peace, stood up, and in detail published the loving-kindness of the Lord; and, turning to one and another, asked if they had ever heard of such a conversion in all their life. We have seen him since, and he continues steadfast and happy. He says, 'I have passed the board of George the Fourth for one and three-pence *per* day, and I hope to pass the board of King Jesus for eternal life.'

"Last night a person called at our house, and gave the following account:—'I was a backslider for seven years, and suffered, during that period, mental anguish beyond description. By various means I lost all my property. About six weeks ago I was deeply awakened, and saw at once the height from whence I had fallen, and the deep pit into which I had sunk. I saw my heart to be the picture of all deformity and the seat of sin. Having some business to settle in Paisley, I went out on the Saturday, intending to spend the Sunday with some religious acquaintances. It was a blessed Sunday to me; for in the prayer-meeting after the evening sermon, God healed my backslidings and pardoned all my iniquities. On returning home I said to my mother, "God has made me happy, He has pardoned my sins." She seemed shocked at my confidence, and after charging me well with presumption, went out, and called two of my sisters, who treated me with the most bitter scorn. One said I was mad; the other affirmed I was drunk, or, if neither mad nor drunk, I must be possessed by a devil. After hearing them in

silence for some time, I told them the whole case, stating where, when, and how, God had set my soul at liberty. Since that hour my mother has never looked me fully in the face, nor has she spoken a dozen words to me on any subject. My sisters often tauntingly ask me if I think that they are sinners ; and whether I have the pride and presumption to think that the decent moral people who go to church are sinners too, and need to be born again.'

"Thus have I run on ; my paper tells me I must compress."

From Glasgow, under date of January 29th, 1834, he writes to me as follows :—

"Sunday week I preached for the first time in one of the kirks of the Establishment. The scene was Port Glasgow, and the occasion the Temperance cause. The minister of the parish and the Burgher minister were present. The kirk, which will hold about twelve or fourteen hundred was full, and I had considerable freedom in delivering my message. The text was Exodus xxiii. 2, first clause : 'Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.' The minister came into the vestry after the service, and after kindly inviting me to lodge with him for the night, which I respectfully declined, asked the beadle if he had any wine. 'No,' said James, 'we hae naething but speerits.' This was spoken in a vestry full of elders and others. The minister appeared to be a little embarrassed. I have engaged to preach another Temperance sermon on Sunday week, in one of the Seceders' chapels in Paisley.

"I have been strangely re-appointed to the Liverpool district, as one of their missionary deputation. Last Saturday I was favoured with an invitation from the London Committee to assist at the May services in London. I feel ashamed to mention this matter ; but you are my friend as well as my brother ; and you will not impute it to vanity, but to friendship. I have

written a reply in the negative, pleading my utter insufficiency for such services. Liverpool I shall visit, if spared."

To his wife he writes from Liverpool, under date of April 14th, 1834 :—

"You will be glad to hear that hitherto the Lord has helped and preserved me in my missionary work. My journey from Glasgow was marked with many mercies. The proprietors of the mail coach having been changed on the Saturday previous to my leaving home, we had new horses a great part of the way, and some of them I assure you were sufficiently unruly. On one occasion, the coach was dragged off the road a few yards, but without any damage to man or beast. I felt throughout the whole journey a delightful consciousness that the God of Providence was nigh at hand, and that He was fully sufficient to control all creatures, to overrule all events, and to afford security to those who were devoted to His service and glory.

"I preached at night to a crowded congregation in our Carlisle chapel. Some hundreds have been brought to God in this circuit since Conference, and from all I could see and hear the work is still deepening and extending. In Preston, where I spent the next night, there has been an equally extensive revival, one fruit of which was a considerable increase in our missionary collections. At Garstang there is a good work also, and some singular conversions have taken place lately. In one of the country places the wife of a maltster of some respectability was awakened to a sense of her lost state as a sinner. Her husband was so much annoyed with her prayers, her admonitions, and her altered mode of living, that he determined, if possible, to obtain a separation. With this intention, he visited her parents, and to their great grief stated his determination, laying down at the same time his proposals respecting an allowance. On his way home he was seized with deep compunction of spirit. Leaving the road, he retired to pray in an adjoining thicket;

and on reaching his home, he met his wife with tears in his eyes, and penitent confessions on his tongue. He entreated her to pray for him, and declared his determination to join her on the road to heaven. He soon after found peace with God; and the results are these:—He has given up the malt trade, he has joined our Society, seven of his children have been brought to a knowledge of the Saviour, and he and his partner are burning and shining lights in the neighbourhood. In another town religion has also entered one of the inns, and the innkeeper's daughter and two of the servants have joined our Society. The collections for the Missions were in advance of the preceding year.

“At Liverpool, also, I am happy to say, there is a revival of the good work, and we hope to reap the advantages of it in our missionary services. I have to preach to-night; and were I to yield to unbelief, I should reckon on a failure; but I feel resolved to make God my strength, and humbly trust that He will not suffer me to be confounded. Kindest love to yourself and the little ones.”

In the account of this journey which he wrote to me, he observes, in addition to what is given above,—“Mr. William Shaw was my colleague in the deputation. He is a noble-minded man; a perfect personification of candour and simplicity. He has evidently been a diligent labourer, an indefatigable student, and a careful observer of men and things. His statements at the different meetings were singularly discreet, luminous, and entertaining. The brethren are all in good health, and are wholly devoted to the work of their Divine Master. The Sabbath congregations in Liverpool were large and deeply devotional. There was also a material improvement in the collections. On Monday night I had to preach the sermon to the Society, which was a trial in prospect; but the Lord

granted help in time of need: so that it proved to me, and I hope to others, a season of great refreshing.

“While in Liverpool I had the pleasure of hearing that Mr. Grindrod is greatly improved, and that a council of physicians had given it as their opinion that there is no organic disease about his heart. In consequence of this decision, he intends to proceed to America at the close of the present or the beginning of next month.”

May 29th, 1834.—“You have no doubt seen and read Watson’s Life by Jackson. The editor did me the honour of presenting me with a copy, accompanied with his best respects. I regard the book as one of the most valuable biographical works which have issued from the press during the present age, though probably too Wesleyan in its spirit and details to be popular with the world, or even with the Church beyond our own pale....The editor promises to be liberal in devoting the pages of the Magazine to the Memoir of Mr. Blaine. As far as it has appeared, it is, to the best of my recollection, verbatim as I sent it. If your memory serves you, you will perceive that I have availed myself of almost every one of your corrections and suggestions. I see not a few defects in its composition; yet I rejoice that I was permitted to write it, and am not without hope that it will be a means of comforting and edifying many.”

October 28th, 1834.—“Sometime ago I was favoured with a very affectionate letter from the President, (the Rev. Joseph Taylor,) written at the instance of the City-Road stewards, asking whether I would consent to be his colleague for the coming year, and assuring me of a cordial invitation, in case of compliance, from the Quarterly Meeting. I thought this a fair opportunity for getting counsel from the wise, and in my reply I

stated my willingness, but at the same time made him acquainted with the reasons for and against my continuance in Scotland, and besought him to weigh them, and to promote my removal, or advise my continuance in the north, as he might judge best. I have not yet heard from him again; but I feel satisfied in my mind with what I have done."

Popular discontent from various causes at this time had become prevalent, and agitation was rising in the Methodist Connexion. He felt as a patriot of his country and a minister of the Church, and writes:—

January 24th, 1835.—“ Never did I feel more solicitous about the destinies of our beloved country, or the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. The people are indeed tumultuous, and they imagine a vain thing. But the Lord sitteth above the water-floods, and He can still the tumults. My endeavour from day to day is to trust in the Lord, and not be afraid,—a lesson which I find at times very difficult to practise, and difficult, chiefly, on account of the shallowness of my piety, and the scantiness of my acquaintance with the Word of God.

“ Our Quarterly Meeting passed over in peace. I was unanimously requested to remain a third year, and to take the Superintendency, which I respectfully declined. Though our Quarterly Meeting was peaceful, I am sorry to say the circuit was not then, neither is it now, in peace.

“ Our increase during the quarter is twenty-six, with one hundred and five on trial. This is in a great degree the result of a revival which we have in Kilsyth and other country places; though I ought to add, that notwithstanding the efforts of a few artful disturbers, a spirit of prayer rests upon many of our members in the town, and occasional conversions have taken place in our classes

and prayer-meetings for the last several weeks. It was gratifying also that the meeting passed a Resolution *nem. con.* expressive of their gratitude to God for the late decision in the Court of Chancery, and congratulating the President on the occasion, because the said decision 'confirmed that holy discipline which the preachers ought ever to exercise over one another.' I think with you that the Providence of God is very manifest in that decision. The whole affair in its management and termination is marvellous. Those who cannot see that God is for us must be wilfully blind."

The reader will understand that the decision referred to was that upon the case of Dr. Warren. He proceeds to make some observations on the fearful position of those persons who take the lead in persecuting a people whom God so manifestly honours, and adds :—

"I was rather startled when I read the proposals for a Wesleyan newspaper, as stated in your letter; but I begin to be reconciled to the project. The undertaking is difficult, but perhaps it is necessary; and with prudent management may be useful to the body. The editor of the Magazine cannot, and ought not to, stoop to refute the scurrilous aspersions which are heaped upon us; and to leave them unrefuted from month to month is construed by many into an acknowledgment of guilt rather than a sign of conscious integrity. It may be so conducted that, as a Body, we need not be held responsible for all its opinions. Let it be for us, but not of us. May the God of our fathers guide us in this as He has done in all preceding perplexities!"

In a letter to the Rev. Thomas Jackson, on the subject of a communication which he had sent to him as editor of the Magazine, etc., he refers, as follows, to the troubles which then agitated the Connexion.

“GLASGOW, *November 11th, 1834.*

“WE deeply sympathize with you, our worthy President and Secretary, with Mr. Bunting, and our other brethren in Manchester, on account of the malignant persecution to which you and they are subjected. Be assured our prayers ascend to the throne of grace in your behalf, both day and night. The accusations of the accusers serve only to make your characters more illustrious in our eyes, and the violent assaults which are made on the principles of our Connexion render these principles, and the men who defend them, more peculiarly dear to our affections. We are comforted with the consideration, that though the individuals who compose our community may be, and are, no doubt, chargeable with much personal unfaithfulness in the sight of God; yet as a community we have neither betrayed the truth nor abandoned the work of God, nor sacrificed the holy discipline which He has established among us. We cannot but regard the present persecution as the consequence of our Connexional fidelity to God, and to the trust which our fathers committed to our keeping; and we are cheered with a lively hope, that the righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness, ‘will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day.’ It is natural for the world to love its own; and because we are not of the world, because we denounce its popular maxims, testify against its evil deeds and godless philosophy, because we refuse to worship the great image of infidel liberalism, which its children have set up, we are marked as the victims of its hate. Be it so. We know our calling, and will, by the help of God, adhere to it. And should we, in aiming at the conversion of the world to God, be reviled, we will bless; should we be persecuted, we will suffer it; and should we be defamed, we will entreat. God has hitherto so identified His presence and His power with our unostentatious proceedings, as to invest our whole economy with a character of mystery in the eyes of worldly men, which

baffles their wisdom and abases their pride ; and while we continue to seek *His* glory, not our own, He will still be unto us a defence and a glory."

April 17th, 1835. He writes to me as follows :—" In my last I mentioned that I thought a good paper might be prepared for the Magazine in the way of improving the present agitations, so as to promote the spiritual interests of the Connexion. You will be surprised when I tell you that I have presumed to attempt this work in a sermon which I have forwarded to the editor. The text is Psalm xc. 16, 17, and the sermon contains the substance of what I showed you in Hull, with a considerable portion of new matter, adapted to existing circumstances. Mr. Jackson is a wise man, and I have left it with him, entreating that he would lay it aside if he should think it not likely to accomplish the end I had in view. I dare say you think me foolish, and I assure you I am not quite satisfied that I have done wisely." This sermon appeared in the Magazine for July and August of 1835.

"I am happy to inform you that the good work in this circuit progresses. A few hints concerning it will be acceptable ; and as I am not full of other news, I shall devote the remainder of this sheet to the subject. The revival, you are aware, originated in Kilsyth ; from thence it spread to Kirkintilloch, then to Airdrie, and latterly we have enjoyed it in Glasgow. For some months prior to its outbreking our old members in the places first visited were the subjects of great grief of soul for sin, as it was felt in themselves, and seen in the world. They were made deeply, and in some instances distressingly, sensible of their personal impotence, and of their absolute dependence on God for power to will and to do ; and a spirit of agonizing prayer rested upon them, which found utterance in vehement longings for the conversion of sinners, especially unconverted relatives. During the winter a considerable number of conversions took place ; but the revival, properly speaking, did not begin till towards the end of February, when two young persons

connected with the Kilsyth Sunday-school were made happy in the love of God, and one of them, in the fulness of her heart, testified what God had done for her soul. The manager was surprised, and felt rather sceptical about the matter ; but recollecting himself, he said, in the hearing of the whole school, ' Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons : but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.' After causing the children to read the passage repeatedly, he commented upon it, saying, ' Children, are these words true ? Are they the words of God ? Do you believe them ? If any of you doubt, here is a living witness of their truth. J. W——, one of the most unlikely girls in the school, has sought and found mercy at the hand of God. She is taken, and you are left. Yet God is no respecter of persons ; therefore ye may be saved also, and the most unlikely among you may be saved first.' While he was speaking in this simple manner, the attention of the children was arrested ; the sentiment of the text was applied by the Spirit, a general weeping ensued, and many of them fell on the floor, crying aloud for mercy. Five young women found peace before the school was dismissed, and in the public congregation in the evening the arrows of conviction flew thick, and stuck fast in the hearts of the King's enemies. Next day the wounded were inconsolable, and came to the houses of our friends, entreating them to pray for them, and without any concert they commenced a series of prayer-meetings, which were kept up day after day for the whole of that week, which providentially was the Sacrament-week, in which, as you know, several days are set apart for public worship in our fatherland. I cannot state the precise number who were blessed ; but I am under the mark when I reckon that sixty souls entered into the liberty of God's children. Since that time instances of awakening and conversion have been frequent, and latterly some of our old members have professed the attainment of the blessing of perfect love. The work at Kirkintilloch is not so remarkable, nor so extensive ; but in each place it exhibits the characteristics of a genuine revival.

“Among the subjects of this blessed work there are men and women of hoary hairs, and children of twelve years of age ; there are many whose lives were strictly moral, and some few whose habits were profligate up to the time when they were awakened. Several who had maintained a steady profession of religion in our own Society, and some in other communities, have been convinced of formality, or hypocrisy, and, after suffering much distress of mind, have entered into the liberty of the sons of God. In some instances parents have been awakened by the testimony of their children, and children have been born again in answer to the prayers of their parents. Some whole families have been brought to the foot of the Cross, and in two others four of their members respectively have been made happy in the love of God. In not a few cases, domestic persecution has been practised with a good deal of severity, and, as you may suppose, there are many scoffers ; but the general impression on the minds of the inhabitants of Kilsyth is, that ‘it is the Lord’s doing.’

“In a majority of instances the new converts have had a passage of Scripture, or a verse of a hymn, applied to their minds, at the time they received a sense of pardon ; and the accuracy with which they have repeated these passages has been to me most exhilarating. Knowing that it was possible, for our young friends particularly, to snatch at the promises without the sanction of a Divine application, I have catechized them in the following manner, and have received from several, substantially, the following answers. The passage, we will suppose, was Matthew xi. 28. I have said, ‘You knew that passage before, did you not ? You have read it again and again, and have heard it repeated by ministers and others, have you not ? Now, how can we account for the fact that it made you happy in this instance, whereas it left no impression on your minds on former occasions ?’ The replies have been, ‘Formerly I did not believe the words were spoken to me, but now I do. They have been applied by the Spirit in a way they never were before. God gave me to see that I had an interest in them which I did not

see before that night.' I asked one young girl, 'Were your thoughts directed to Jesus at the time you found peace?'—'Yes.' 'Were your thoughts fixed on any one part of His work as a Saviour more than another?'—'Yes: on His death.'—I am not prepared to say that all who have made a profession of pardon stand fast: but of the great majority I can say, they evidence the reality of their change thus far, by the teachableness of their dispositions, a readiness to forgive injuries, an unwillingness to repeat grievances, a careful abstinence from every topic which involves the character of others; their love to the means of grace, the sacred Scriptures, the souls of their relatives; and to those who are partakers of like precious faith with themselves, their love is proverbial. I am happy to add, also, that family religion is cultivated where it was previously neglected. The Sabbath is sanctified by those who had previously profaned it, and total abstinence from ardent spirits is, I believe, generally adopted. The greatest part of the young people who have been brought in are either the children of our friends, or the scholars in our Sunday-schools; and among the adults are members of the Established Church, the Relief, the Burghers, the Independents, and the Baptists, who, while thankful for the good they have obtained in our meetings, still abide in their own communion.

"As you may suppose, the subjects of this work have no relish for agitation or strife. One of the Kilsyth men, being in Glasgow when the work commenced, had a bundle of the firebrand papers given to him; but perceiving by the speech of him who gave them, that they had no connection with the salvation of sinners, he put them in his pocket, and entirely forgot he had received them, till about a week after, when he devoted them unread to the flames. I am of opinion that not fewer than one hundred and fifty persons have experienced a saving change within the last three months, and the work goes on.*

* This Methodist revival was one of the chief harbingers of the great one which took place in Kilsyth and the neighbourhood soon after. The following favourable notice of the Wesleyan-Methodist

“My Zetland journey presses heavily on my mind. I must leave home in a few days, and purpose to go by Leith. Do not forget to pray for me, for my family, and for my circuit in my absence. Hoping in God for a safe and prosperous journey, and wishing you all personal and domestic happiness, I remain,” etc.

In connection with the revival described above, he writes, “The following simple narrative was delivered in my hearing, by a young man, at the renewing of tickets in the town of Airdrie. It was spoken in the broad Scotch dialect, and charmed me much. ‘Ane afternoon last week, I said to Geordie my brither, Brither, hae ye ony objection to walk out to the wood to converse a little this fine evening? No, Robin, said Geordie, I can hae nae objection to sic a proposal as that. Wi’ that, we took our sma’ Bibles in our hand, and walkin’ to the laneliest part, we read largely concerning the things o’ the kingdom. What t’ane did na understand, t’ither tried to explain, and though we mak nae pretence to learnin’, we were favoured wi’ many a bright view o’ the precious truth. After we had been thus engaged for a lang time, Geordie proposed that we should gang hame. Brither, I said, I think we had better pray first. He seemed to

Society in this place, in its relation to that great work of God, is extracted from page 86 of the very remarkable *Life of the Rev. W. C. Burns*, by his brother Dr. J. Burns, published, 1870.

“Meanwhile influences of a concurrent kind were at work elsewhere, and tended still further to quicken the pulse of religious life in the place. Similar tokens of reviving earnestness were appearing more or less extensively amongst the members of the other Christian denominations around, and particularly in connection with a small but very fervent Society of Wesleyan Methodists, whose distinctive teaching tended greatly to emphasize in the minds of the people the great ideas of conversion, the new birth, and the conscious peace and life of God, and whose unwearied activity and zeal for the gathering in of souls spread by a happy infection to the hearts of others.”

think it strange that we should kneel down i' the wood. But I said, Brither, let us never be ashamed o' that which, rightly considered, is a great privilege. So we baith knelt down, and I assure you it was nae private matter; for ere lang we were favoured wi' sic a down-pouring o' the Spirit, that we made the wood and the water ring again with the voice of prayer and praise. On returnin' hame, we said, This is a day of good tidings, and we must not hold our peace.—Now ye maun ken that Geordie's wife has not been very lifey o' late; so we thought we would pray wi' her, if peradventure the Lord would quicken her soul. We were not disappointed, for while we prayed the heavens were opened, and blessings were poured down in sic abundance that there was not room enough to receive them. After this I went out to the gairden, and kneeled down by mysel, to praise rather than to pray. This was the most wonderfu' part of all: for I seemed to be filled with the fulness of God. It was now late, and on gettin into my room, as I was about to kneel down as usual, the devil whispered in my ear,—Surely you 're not goin' to pray again! You have been praying all the afternoon and evening. Ye'll weary God. I saw the cloven foot of the enemy in the sujession at once, and drew nigh again with holy delight. After which I slept, an' took quiet rest, for the Lord sustained me.' ”

CHAPTER FIFTH.

VISIT TO ZETLAND.

By the Conference of 1834 he was appointed to visit the Societies in the Zetland Islands, and present his report to the Conference following. He fulfilled the duty assigned him, and in due time gave in his Report, which is recorded in the Magazine for November and December, 1835. Instead of transferring that Report into these pages, we shall only extract that part which describes the religious condition of the people prior to the commencement of the Wesleyan-Methodist mission among them, and select those passages from his private journal, which gives most of the information contained in the Report in the form of narrative, as he received it in his intercourse with the people.

The Report states, that when the Wesleyan ministers first visited Zetland, week-day preaching, and meetings for prayer and mutual exhortation, were novelties; many of the people lived from seven to twelve miles from a place of worship; and in numerous instances the aged and infirm had not seen a minister, or heard a sermon, for some years. The Sabbath and day schools were few and inefficient; and the youth, in many neighbourhoods, were beginning to manifest such a disregard for sacred things as excited serious alarm among the more considerate part of the

community. On the silent Sabbaths,—those on which there was no service in the kirk,—which were then numerous, they were in the habit of meeting in groups, in the house of some hoary oracle of legendary lore, for the purpose of amusing each other by the relation of romantic stories. The views of all classes on religious subjects were defective and incorrect; the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins was neither enjoyed nor looked for by the multitude; and even those who lived in the fear of the Lord were restrained from claiming this blessing, under an apprehension that only ministers and martyrs were entitled to expect it. The doctrines of Christ's Divinity and Atonement were preached and generally believed, but the personality, the various offices and saving operations, of the Holy Spirit were seldom adverted to in the pulpit, and many among the people were as ignorant on these points as though they had never heard whether there were any Holy Ghost. The popular belief was, that the moral law was not binding on Christians; and it was boldly asserted, that every man must of necessity "break it daily, in thought, word, and deed." All calamities by sea, accidents on land, and instances of flagrant transgression among the people, were solved, with gloomy and paralyzing complacency, by a reference to the doctrine of fate. Apparition tales were rife; omens connected with the clouds, the flight of birds, etc., were regarded with superstitious dread; the future fortunes of men and women were foretold with the greatest confidence; dreams were interpreted on a regular plan; and he was reckoned bold, if not profane, who doubted the existence of witches, fairies, etc. The vulgar prejudice which has existed from olden times, among seafaring men, against sailing with ministers of the

Gospel, reigned in its strength among the fishermen of Zetland. If a fishing-party happened to see a minister as they were proceeding to the beach, or if his name was repeated in conversation while they were rowing to the station, the circumstance was deemed by all an evil omen, and they either returned home or proceeded in gloom, without any hope of success. As soon as our missionaries became acquainted with this godless superstition, being aware of the pernicious bearing which it must necessarily have upon their pastoral labours, they reasoned against it with all their might, but apparently to no purpose; they then requested permission to accompany the men to the "deep seas," and almost forced themselves into the boats. Providence was propitious, and after a series of successful experiments had been made in different districts, the spell was broken, and the presence of a preacher was esteemed a privilege. The Bible at this time was wanting in many cottages, other books were few, and these being generally of a religious character, reading was seldom practised. Had all the parish ministers been diligent and devoted, they were far too few to supply the spiritual wants of the community; and being, in too many instances, careless and worldly, it is not matter of surprise that thousands of the people had occasion to cry, "No man careth for my soul."

In setting out for Zetland he was detained some days at Leith by contrary winds; but the time did not pass unprofitably. Writing to Mrs. M'Owan, he says, "Services have been held in our chapel. One person has been awakened, and another has found peace, by my feeble instrumentality. This amply compensates for the delay."—We now introduce

HIS ZETLAND JOURNAL.

"May 4th, 1835.—On reaching the quay at six o'clock A.M. I learned, to my surprise and dismay, that the 'Norma' had sailed out of harbour about an hour before our arrival. We engaged a boat to take us out into the Frith, where we saw the vessel riding, with sails unfurled, about three quarters of a mile distant. As a substitute for a flag we hoisted a handkerchief on the top of an umbrella, and did our best to attract the attention of the ship's crew. We had not proceeded far when we were hailed by the pilot's boat, which was returning with a young man on board, having instructions from the captain not to return without me. This information re-established the captain in my good graces, and changing the boat, we glided along in conscious security towards our vessel. The morning was fine; and the light breeze was just sufficient to swell the sail, to curl the wave, and to inspire the sailor with hope. The broad Frith being speckled with a multitude of small boats, one of our party inquired what they were engaged in at that early hour. The pilot replied, 'They are catching oysters, good and bad: the good they keep, and the bad they throw away.' I was not more ready to point out the bearing which the fact he mentioned had on our individual case than he was to admit the propriety of the application. I found, on inquiry, that all on board were inhabitants of Zetland, and in them I had a pleasing specimen of the frankness, intelligence, and kindness of the people among whom I was going. The young man who had been commissioned to seek me out was a member of our Society in Lerwick; and the cabin boy had been a scholar in our Sunday-school. Throughout the day the wind was light and variable, so that, though we sailed about fifty miles on different tacks, we gained no more than eighteen miles in a direct line. During the day I had some interesting conversation with Mr. H——, a member of an Independent Church in Lerwick; and also with a young man, whom I found to be a peni-

tent, waiting for redemption through the blood of the Lamb. As night came on, the wind freshened, and veered round to a more favourable point, and we scudded before it at an increased rate.

“5th.—Among the first sounds which saluted my ears on waking this morning, were the fervent breathings of devotion from a fellow passenger on the opposite side of the cabin. Thus prompted, I also lifted up my heart to the Giver of all my mercies, and felt it good to give Him thanks, to implore His protection, and to place myself, my family, the Church, and the world, under the wing of His mercy. Throughout this day I felt very happy in the conscious enjoyment of God and in committing myself, family, circuit, and all to His gracious care.

“6th.—About noon, we passed the Fair Isle, the first of the Zetland group. This island is situated between the most northern of the Orkney Isles, and the south point of the main land of Zetland. It belongs to an Orkney laird, and carries on more trade with Orkney than Zetland; but it is reckoned to be in the parish of Dunrossness, and pays tithes to the minister of that parish. The land is one precipitous rock, rising where the North Sea and the Atlantic meet, and is consequently surrounded with what is called a ‘roost,’ *i. e.*, a place where contrary currents meet, rendering the navigation rough and dangerous. It is about three miles square, containing about three hundred inhabitants. When their crops fail they are often reduced to great straits; but such is their love for one another, and for their isle, that it is next to impossible to prevail upon any of them to leave the spot. They have a kirk and a school. The minister does not visit them oftener than once a year, but the schoolmaster lives there. It was on the rocky shore of this island that the Duke de Medina Sidonia, the admiral of the Spanish Armada, was wrecked in 1588, when attempting to return to Spain. The remains of his stately vessel are still visible when the bosom of the deep is untroubled. We have a Society here of fifty members, and the preachers of the Lerwick circuit visit them, as the weather and their

other numerous engagements permit. The leaders are worthy men, and they are indefatigable in their endeavours to keep the souls of the people alive to God. We reached the sound which stretches before Lerwick about four P.M., having run about three hundred miles in fifty-seven hours. The wind being favourable, the 'Norma' came in with the speed of a bird, and through some difficulty which occurred in lowering the mainsail, we were in considerable danger of drifting on the rocks. To prevent this, the captain ran to drop the anchor, and in his eagerness to let it down, his leg got entangled in the chain: but by a prompt and vigorous effort on the part of the crew he was extricated from his perilous position, with no other injury than some severe bruises. In a few minutes I was surrounded by Mr. Catton and other of the Lerwick friends, from whom I received a hearty welcome to their much-loved islands.

"7th.—Spent the forenoon in visiting our friends, and in viewing the town. It is comparatively modern, having risen to its present position during the past and present century, in consequence of the superiority of its harbour to that of Scalloway, on the western shore, which was the ancient capital. It contains about three thousand inhabitants. The parish kirk, the Wesleyan chapel, the Independent meeting-house, and the town hall are the principal buildings. A new burial ground has been lately enclosed on the outskirts of the town, which, together with some recent improvements for the accommodation of the shipping, gives to the whole, when viewed from the Sound, an air of importance, comfort, and growing prosperity. Charlotte Fort, commanding the harbour, is mounted with twelve pieces of cannon, and the barracks can accommodate a regiment of soldiers. It was built in Cromwell's time, and was repaired during the reign of George III. The officers' apartments in the barracks are at present let to a physician, who has published a history of the islands; and to Miss Campbell, who keeps a seminary for young ladies, and is the author of a volume of poems of some merit. There are two subscription libraries in Lerwick, to one of which the lamented Dr. Adam Clarke, presented a

complete set of the 'Christian Library' in fifty volumes, with some other valuable works; and the librarian assured me that several of the country people had read the whole fifty volumes in regular order.

"The docks lie a little north of the garrison. They are private property, and are likely to remunerate their enterprising owner with the most ample returns. The establishment of the herring fishery here has formed a new era in the history of Lerwick; and the inhabitants are amazed at their own ignorance and apathy, in permitting this bounty of Providence to come annually, and to be reaped by others, whilst they either starved at home, or sought a precarious existence abroad.

"In the afternoon, we crossed the Sound to the island of Bressay, and climbed to the top of the Whart, a hill which rises six hundred feet above the level of the sea. The prospect from this elevation is grand. The sky being clear, the eye ranged over a panoramic view of fifty miles in extent. The Sound which we had crossed slept at our feet, reflecting on its bosom the forms of the few vessels lying at anchor before the town. The main-land, with its numerous fresh-water lochs, stretched away to the north. The German Ocean gently laved the southern shore, while a hundred isles spotted the deep, and furnished shade to the scene on either hand. Foulah, situated in the Atlantic, reared her lofty summits to the clouds, maintaining by her proud elevation the character of the ocean in which she had fixed her everlasting seat; while the Bona, loftier still, formed the distant background, and gave a character of sublimity to the whole. At the foot of the Whart we gathered primroses, and on the bank of a streamlet we found a few violets. We afterwards visited the gardens of Mr. Mowat, of Gardie, in which we found vegetation smiling amid surrounding sterility, and all the beautiful flowers and delicious fruits peculiar to more southern climes, rising to maturity with a rapidity and freshness which to me were astonishing. We were informed that grapes from the hothouse at Gardie formed part of the dessert at the dinner given to Earl Grey at Edinburgh.

"9th.—A true Zetland day; cold, misty, rainy, and depressing to the spirits. To-morrow is the Sabbath of the Lord: O that I may be prepared with the preparation of the sanctuary!

"10th.—I have been enabled throughout this day in a blessed degree to feel the responsibility of my office and position. I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing, of myself; but my sufficiency is of God. The duty of visiting the islands was laid upon me by my brethren and fathers. I had no opportunity of pleading my unfitness for the work; and having been brought here by a kind Providence, I am resolved not to doubt, but to trust, and not be afraid. In the morning I preached from 1 Thessalonians v. 23, 24; and though grieved that the great doctrine of sanctification was so poorly stated and enforced, I am not without hope that many were excited to hunger and thirst after righteousness. In the evening I endeavoured to explain and apply the trial and triumph of Abraham's faith. The congregation was overflowing and respectable. Those who imagine that ministers of very inferior talent will do for Zetland are mistaken, so far as Lerwick is concerned. I have not for a long time addressed a more exciting or, according to its size, a more intelligent congregation.

"Not a shop is open in Lerwick on Sundays; and all the people attend a place of worship, with only a few exceptions. The members of our Societies are living in a justified state, and a few profess to have obtained the blessing of entire sanctification. They are, generally speaking, a dew among the people, and as lights in the neighbourhood where they live.

"The Sunday-school contains about one hundred and sixty children. They are taught by fourteen teachers, who for punctuality and general competency would reflect credit on any similar institution in the kingdom. There is a small library, belonging equally to the school and congregation, which has done great good, and which 'the friends of Zetland' should be careful to support and enlarge. The following incident may perhaps stimulate some to assist in this good work.

The day after my arrival in Lerwick, a box full of books from England, addressed to Mr. Catton, was brought in, with several smaller packages for the other circuits. There was no letter with them, but from the character of the volumes we concluded they were intended to replenish the library. As soon as the contents of the box were examined, Mr. Catton proposed that we should sing a hymn of praise, after doing which we kneeled down, and gave God thanks for the talents and piety of the men who had written the books; for the Tract Society, which had published them in so cheap and portable a form; for having put it into the heart of the unknown friend to devise things so liberal in behalf of poor Zetland; and we concluded by imploring Heaven's richest blessings on the head of our benefactor, praying at the same time that God would make the various volumes the means of life and edification to all their readers. Never can I forget the eagerness and exultation with which the brethren examined and praised these volumes. Many of the books belonging to the library were perused to tatters, and they were afraid that the extinction of the lending system would be the lamentable result. But here were fifty volumes, great and small, presented without money and price: and coming at such a crisis they were reckoned indeed a God-send. On the following morning a letter arrived, informing us that we were indebted for the treasure to the Rev. William Wears and friends in Sunderland.

"I may here add, that there is not a bookseller's shop within the precincts of Zetland; and were there many, the country people are so poor, that they could make no purchases. Mr. Catton, on one occasion, asked a young woman of about nineteen years of age, who had been his guide for several miles, whether she would have a sixpence or a New Testament for her trouble. The question evidently threw her into considerable perplexity; but, after a pause, she replied, 'I never had a sixpence of my own since I was born; and you may be sure I should like to have one now; but the New Testament is the Book of God; and therefore, if you please, I shall choose it.'

"11th.—Set out early for Scalloway. It is about six English miles from Lerwick, and a great part of the way we had no road to guide us; but Messrs. Catton and Breare were at no loss; for, like experienced mountaineers, they scaled hill after hill, crossed the deep beds of mountain streams without number, walking through heath, as if going along a pavement, and trying all the time in the true spirit of kindness to enamour me with the sombre scenes which opened out before us as we journeyed along. At length we reached the highest hill, and the prospect was indeed grand. The town lay in the valley, and on the border of a fine bay. The ancient castle rose towering in hoary dignity far above the surrounding cottages, and a number of sloops lay at anchor, safely sheltered from almost every wind. The castle is the finest in the island. It is a square massive building, and is, as far as the outer walls are concerned, entire. It was built in 1600 by Earl Patrick Stewart, and its erection became the occasion of grievous oppression to the peasantry, who were forced to contribute both money and labour till the structure was completed.

"I think I never saw in any people a more intense desire to hear the Word, or a more tender affection for the ministers, than among those we conversed with in the town of Scalloway. Some of them followed us from house to house, considering it a pleasure to hear our conversation and unite with us in prayer, and literally trod in our steps, reminding me of that passage in Isaiah lii. 7: 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,' etc. We then sailed to Bressay Isle, and, after a long and fatiguing walk, reached the chapel. After preaching to about fifty persons, gathered together on a short warning, and endeavouring to reconcile two men who had quarrelled, I retired to rest, sufficiently tired, having walked ten miles.

"12th.—Rose early and went to view the precipitous rocks on the shore of the great Atlantic, which were only about half a mile distant. I was particularly struck with the majesty of one huge rock, which, like a wall of

adamant, stretched out from the shore at least two hundred feet, and rose to the height of at least one hundred and twenty feet above the level of the sea, with a rude arch about forty feet high, and twenty feet broad, through which the waves rushed with awful impetuosity. Two of our friends kindly undertook to row us over to the main-land. Their kind assiduities and intelligent converse showed the estimation in which they held their ministers, and the profit they had derived from their instructions. On our way we called on Widow Sinclair, for the purpose of baptizing her infant. Her husband, I was informed, had died of consumption about four months before, leaving her with five young children, and within a short period of her confinement with the sixth. Having entered on the cultivation of a waste piece of land, on which they expended their little all, expecting that in after years it would become profitable, he left her in debt to the laird to the amount of £15. This is a great grief to her, and in her efforts to pay it off, she is in danger of destroying both her health and life. Her farm consists of seven acres; and though only six weeks have elapsed since the birth of her child, she has dug nearly the whole of the cultivated portion of the ground. She is generally in the field by four or five o'clock in the morning, and except brief intervals for taking food, and suckling her baby, she continues working until a late hour. She came out of the field to meet us, and in a few minutes was dressed in her best clothes, her child was washed, and her neighbours assembled to witness the baptism, and to hear an address from the minister. Mr. Catton baptized, I spoke to those present, and after engaging in prayer, and leaving our blessing with the widow and the fatherless, we ascended the hill on the side of which her house is built. I know not that I was ever more affected with suffering worth than on this occasion. The view we had from the summit of the mountain was grand beyond description. From twenty to thirty islands lay scattered before us. The deep and well cultivated valley formed a crescent around the base of the hill; a fresh-water loch lay on our left, and

hills stretching out on the right towered high one above another.

"13th.—We this day commenced our District Meeting. All the ministers were present, and in good health. It is rather remarkable that no preacher has died in Zetland since the mission was commenced twelve years ago: a kind Providence has watched over them, as the numerous hair-breadth escapes they have had by sea and land abundantly prove. They are a company of devoted men, and really love the work in which they are engaged. Their toil and privations almost exceed belief, and their solicitude respecting the revival of the work of God is great.

"14th.—We have this day concluded the business of the District Meeting in peace, and I hope to our mutual improvement. The brethren return to their circuits purposing to make full proof of their ministry. May their labours be crowned with still more abundant success! It appears from their statements, that the number of ministers in the Church has been increased since the introduction of Methodism from twelve to sixteen. The Dissenting ministers have increased within the same period from two to seven. Several clergymen who only preached once on Sunday now preach twice; and instead of suffering a lowering sky to deter them from visiting a distant congregation for weeks together, they now brave the storm, and are duly at their post. Pastoral visitation is also much more frequent; and in connection with some valuable teaching, I regret that they sometimes exert their ministerial influence in the way of bestowing gifts, and dealing out threatenings, in order to prevent the people attending our ministry and uniting with our Societies. In every part of the islands our poor members are denied all relief from the parish funds, though parish dues and ministers' tiends are exacted from those of them who hold farms, to the same amount as if they were members of the Established Church.

"15th.—After much pleasing conversation the brethren left us to-day for their different stations. We walked about two miles with them, and felt our hearts so knit

to each other that it was difficult to part. Their past privations, toils, and dangers afford them pleasure in the retrospect; and they entertain no gloomy forebodings respecting the future. I never met with an equal number of brethren more united to each other, more devoted to the work in which they were engaged, more willing to take up or firm to sustain the consecrated cross. After commending each other to God, and to the Word of His grace, they proceeded on their journey, and we returned to Lerwick.

“16th.—To-day Mr. Catton and I rode six miles, and walked eighteen to Dunrossness, where we have one of the most prosperous Societies in the islands. We passed the bay of Coningsburgh, where two hundred and eighty whales were stranded last year. This was, in the language of the people, a God-send; and but for the exorbitant exactions of the owner of the land in the vicinity, it would have benefited them for years. He claimed £300 of the spoil, and the poor men only obtained about seven shillings each. We saw the skeleton of one of the monsters lying on the sand; part of the tail remained; we counted forty-three vertebræ in the back-bone, and the entire length of the fish was probably about thirty-seven feet. A little farther on, we passed the bay of Shanawick, where seven hundred whales were driven on shore some time before the Coningsburgh shoal was secured. The laird's portion of this was £500, and each man's share amounted to nine shillings. As we were passing through a marshy part of the moor, intersected with deep pits, Mr. Catton pointed to a spot where a young woman who had undertaken to guide him to the chapel with a burning peat in her hand, had fallen in up to the neck. On getting out, she returned home to change her clothes; but so great was her desire to hear the Word, that she got to the chapel before he had finished his sermon. A little further on, in a place still more entangled with pits, and consequently more dangerous, he informed me that Mr. Knowles lost his way one night, and wandered about in the greatest peril for several hours; leading his horse along over narrow ridges, and through swamps,

which must have appeared to him, in the gloom of night, like 'the valley of the shadow of death.' Being thoroughly fatigued, we reached the end of our journey about seven o'clock; having been on the road from ten o'clock in the morning. We were kindly entertained by Adam Arcus and his wife, who were the first to open their door for preaching in Dunrossness. God has given them their reward: for, besides making them partakers of His great salvation, He has brought three of their children to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; and Lawrence, their second son, is a useful leader and local preacher. After satisfying our hunger with such fare as the cottage afforded, we went to meet the leaders, and spent upwards of an hour in arranging Society affairs.

"17th.—This has been a rainy, tempestuous day; yet Mr. Catton has walked fourteen miles, and preached twice. I have preached twice, and given the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the Society, which consists of about one hundred and sixty members. Some of the people came six miles to hear the Word of God explained, and to commemorate the dying love of their Redeemer. I have seldom felt my heart more drawn out in preaching to any people than to these. The Word came with power, as their tears, their shouts of praise, and their voluntary testimonies proved.

"The chapel in Dunrossness is situated on rising ground, covered with loose, large stones. From its front both the Atlantic and German Oceans can be seen. On the north is the hill of Scosburgh, and to the south is a fresh-water loch, extending through the valley for about two miles. It is surrounded by a numerous population, who crowd to its services from four miles round. On a dark night, when lighted, it is like a city on a hill in miniature; and its effect on the surrounding darkness reminds one of the words of the prophet: 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad,' etc. The station is wisely chosen, and the preaching of our ministers has been made a general blessing to the people. One man, in the fulness of his heart, said, 'It was a bright day to Dunrossness when the Methodists came; the best day that we or our fathers ever saw.'

We were dark and knew nothing before that time; but now we are light in the Lord; we have a remedy for our sorrows; and though we are poor, we are not so poverty-stricken as we once were.' Another said, 'The Good Being sent the Methodist preachers here as certainly as Christ sent the Apostles to the Gentiles. Every second Sunday was a silent one in the kirk, and that day was spent in an evil way, especially by the young people. But now we have no silent Sabbath, even in the kirk; and the preaching in the chapel is the power of God to our salvation.' The greater part of the people, I was told, could read; and their eagerness to obtain tracts, etc., indicated their delight in the exercise. But books are exceedingly scarce. The Bible is wholly wanting in some families, and in others only fragments of it are found. The cottagers think themselves rich indeed if to a Bible they can add a Wesleyan Hymn-Book. They are upwards of twenty miles from Lerwick; yet some of the women have been known to walk this distance to obtain a second-hand Hymn-Book. The superintendent of the school, who is also an exhorter, informed me that the only Commentary on the Scriptures he possessed was the Hymn-Book. He said he was greatly at a loss to explain those passages which referred to the manners and customs of the East; and modestly requested that I might procure for him some book which treated on these subjects.

"18th.—This day we visited the family of Mr. Grierson, laird of Innendale. He was not at home; but his excellent and accomplished lady received us in the spirit of kindness and Christian affection. She made many references to the former visits of the preachers, as seasons of refreshing to her soul, and expressed her deep regret that she should in all probability see Mr. Catton no more. 'We met,' said she, 'in the name and spirit of our Divine Master. Our interviews, I hope, have been mutually profitable, and such as He has smiled upon; and it is my wish that we should part as we met; so you will be pleased to unite with us in prayer.'

"Mr. Catton and I then walked to the top of Fitful,

one of the boldest promontories in Zetland. It rises perpendicularly from the sea to the height of eight hundred feet. It runs in a north-west direction about two miles, and terminates in abrupt and terrific crags. The view from the top of the hill, both by sea and land, is extensive and interesting. To the east lie the ruins of the old parish church, which, on account of the encroachments of the ocean, and the sweeping of the sand inland, which threatens to cover the surrounding country, has been long ago abandoned. In the churchyard, several tombstones are still visible, on which the 'arms' of some families of distinction are still legible, proving that 'the fashion of this world passeth away.'

"After dining with the family of Mr. Grierson, we walked to the chapel, which was three miles distant; and concluded the day by holding a missionary meeting, the first that has been held in this parish. The people were deeply affected by the statements given. Many prayers were offered up for the conversion of the world; and out of their penury the people gave eight shillings and sixpence to the Missions. This is the most fruitful part of the main-land, and has been called the Mid Lothian of Zetland. It is also the most thickly populated district in the islands, and is by far, the most lovely and interesting which I have seen. Dunrossness has been called the Yorkshire of Methodism.

"19th.—We walked to Sumbra Head to inspect the lighthouse which stands on its summit. We had been invited by Mr. Lauton, its occupier; and when we came within view, he hoisted the flag, as a token that we were observed, and that we were welcome to his elevated dwelling. The rock on which it stands is three hundred feet above the level of the sea, which dashes its proud waves beneath; and the tower, which is built of stone brought from the vicinity of Leith, is thirty feet in height. The frame-work of the glass dome is made of iron, and the glass is of amazing thickness. A strong iron gallery surrounds it, from which there is a magnificent prospect. There are twenty-six reflectors which are made of copper, richly plated, each of which cost £50. The lights do not revolve. The lamps are supplied with

spermaceti oil, twelve hundred gallons of which are annually consumed ; and the entire expenditure of this princely establishment is about £18,000 per annum.

“After spending a short time here we started for Sandwick, about twelve miles distant, where I was expected to preach ; and before we reached our destination we were completely tired. Mr. Catton stopped three miles short of it, and preached to a number of people, while Mr. B. and I pushed forward to meet the Sandwick congregation. I forgot my fatigue whilst I set before them the nature and advantages of true godliness. During the day I have walked about twenty English miles, through bogs and over hills, in the true Zetland style, and, though tired, I am not laid up. How great was our surprise and grief on learning from the ‘Watchman’ of the 13th that the Rev. Valentine Ward was no more ! How mysterious are the ways of Providence ! How shortsighted is man ! How uncertain is life ! How wise are they who live for eternity, and who lay up treasure in heaven ! Mr. Ward was to me a friend and a father. He admonished me of danger, he instructed me in my duty, and always felt a lively interest in my welfare and ministerial usefulness. In his death I have lost an advocate at the throne of grace, and the Connexion to which he belonged has lost an able minister. His chapel-building schemes in Scotland were unfortunate, but his regard for Scotland was tender ; and his desires for the prosperity of the Scottish Societies were ardent. These repeated bereavements call aloud upon all to trim their lamps, to gird up their loins, to improve their talents, and to do with their might whatever their hand findeth to do.

“20th.—We started for Lerwick about ten o’clock, and after walking about six miles called at the house of Mr. G., an elder in the Established Church. Mr. and Mrs. G. gave us a hearty welcome. Their hospitality, intelligence, and spirituality were affecting. Having rested ourselves awhile, we started again ; and after walking four more miles we met the ponies which we had engaged, and rode leisurely to Lerwick.

“In all these journeys I have been mercifully pre-

served. With the various scenes in the islands I have been highly delighted, and with the conversation of my companions I have been greatly edified. I have received multiplied evidences of the kindness of the people, and have had ample proofs of the greatness of the work which God has wrought by means of my brethren. As in all places, so in Zetland, Methodists are a proverb of reproach and scorn. The full salvation which they preach, and the happy and triumphant experience which they often enjoy, and the testimony which they bear respecting the necessity of repentance and regeneration, procure for them the character of enthusiasts, and the usual catalogue of opprobrious names and epithets. Some instances of intolerance in clergymen, and of bitterness in Dissenters, have come to my knowledge; but I choose to bury them in forgetfulness, hoping that the individuals concerned will soon be better taught and better inclined.

“21st.—At seven I attended a temperance meeting in our chapel, and delivered a long address; after which twenty-four persons gave in their names as members. This also, I trust, is for the furtherance of the Gospel.

“22nd.—To-day five men arrived from Orkney in an open boat, with intelligence that the seed which Messrs. Catton and Breare sowed there in February is springing up, and bringing forth fruit to the glory of God. They inform us that young and old, rich and poor, in the island of Stronsay, were impressed that the work is of God, and that the persons who were admitted on trial give evidence of this by continuing to meet in class, and show a consistent walk and conversation; and that, notwithstanding that the Secession ministers have been preaching against us, the people generally long for another visit. The sole reason for their coming to Lerwick is to carry Mr. Breare back with them. Their commission is, not to return without him, and while they are prepared to sail at a minute's warning, they are ready to wait for days, if he cannot go earlier. The Holy Ghost has thought it right to record that three men came from Cæsarea to Joppa for Peter, that he

might tell Cornelius and his family what they ought to do ; and here five men come a hundred miles, across one of the most troubled seas in the world, on precisely the same errand. Mr. Breare intends to go with them next day. O that the Holy Spirit may qualify him for the work to which both God and man call him ; and while he declares to them that ‘ God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him,’ may the Spirit fall on them, and dispose them to embrace the common Saviour ! I seem to have finished my labours in these islands. May the God of all grace water the seed which has been sown, and in His kind Providence conduct me safely and speedily to my dear family, and to my own circuit, which I feel to be my proper sphere.

“ 23rd.—Winds light and adverse. The ‘ Norma,’ therefore, will not sail before Monday. This affords great pleasure to many of the Lerwick friends, as they hope to enjoy my ministry another Sabbath. Some persons profess to have received spiritual benefit already ; and while these may be confirmed in their determinations, it is hoped others may be stirred up. I murmur not that my plans are thwarted : it is long since I have been taught to pray,

‘ My every weak, though good design,
O’errule, or change, as seems Thee meet ;

and in the present instance I feel no rebellious inclination. About eleven, we accompanied Mr. Breare to Scalloway, from whence he is to sail in an open boat. This undertaking is not without hazard ; but being full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, he fears no evil. His is the soul of a missionary. May the Angel of the Covenant be his guard while he voyages across the boisterous ocean, where he and his Superintendent had nearly found a watery grave a few months back !

“ I learnt this evening from Mr. Smith, that twenty-four years ago his father-in-law, an elder of the kirk, obtained a copy of Wesley’s Journal, by reading of which he and several other inhabitants of Lerwick became dissatisfied with their spiritual condition. Not

finding that assistance from the ministry of their own clergyman, they wrote to our chairman of the Edinburgh district, to send them a missionary. The chairman advised them to write to Dr. Coke, but the Doctor was so engrossed with his other missionary affairs, that though he pitied them, he could send them no relief. Finding this door closed, they wrote to Mr. Haldane of Edinburgh, and he and Mr. Innes of that city soon after paid them a visit, and made a tour through the islands, to the joy and spiritual edification of many. On their return two Independent ministers came to form churches, and itinerate, as circumstances might allow. Mr. Reid, who still survives, formed a church in Lerwick; and Mr. Nichol, whose faithful labours are still remembered, was lost in the 'Coldstream' Leith packet, in 1822, while returning to Edinburgh.

"The following circumstance may also show how extensively the writings of Wesley have been blessed to the edification of those who never saw his face. Some years before Methodism was introduced into Zetland, in a tea party, where a minister was present, the company began discussing the merits of Methodism. The majority of the friends agreed that Mr. Wesley had taught many erroneous doctrines, and that the increase of the sect was to be deprecated. After much had been said on these subjects Mrs. P., who is still alive, said with great energy, "I am not a Methodist, nor did I ever hear one of their ministers, but I cannot sit quietly and hear John Wesley traduced; for I am sure he was a man of God, from the benefit I have derived from his Notes on the New Testament."

"24th.—I have this day spent myself in endeavouring to recommend Christ and His great salvation to the acceptance of sinners and the esteem of saints, from the following texts,—Matt. xi. 28–30, and Rev. xxii. 17. Many were affected, especially in the morning and evening service. I see great cause for shame and confusion of face, but I take refuge in the wounds of Jesus, rejoicing that I do not stand before the holy Lord God, who made heaven and earth, on the score of merit, but by faith in His well-beloved Son.

“ Mr. Catton has this day performed an herculean task ; besides preaching to congregations gathered on the spur of the moment, and holding many religious conversations, he has travelled twenty-four miles, half of it on horseback. He did this, rather than please himself by hearing another preacher.

“ 25th.—This morning, though the wind continued unfavourable, the captain of the ‘ Norma ’ fixed twelve o’clock noon as the hour for sailing. I spent an hour or two in visiting the friends, and was told by several of them, that they were now satisfied, and no longer prayed for my detention ; that up to Sunday they had resolved to hold me, if faith and prayer could prevail ; that God had granted their desire, and now they hoped I should have a safe, if not a speedy, passage. At twelve I went on board, and after tacking about for an hour in the Sound, as if to prove our impotence, we were liberated by the springing up of a brisk breeze from the north-east, a quarter from which there had been no wind for seven or eight days. At seven we were off the Fair Isle, having sailed forty-eight miles in six hours. I felt inexpressible sweetness in commending the friends I had left behind, and those I expected to meet, together with myself, and all on board, to the care of Him whose eyelids never sleep. About eleven the breeze freshened, and turned decidedly aft. While setting the sails for this change, one of the ropes connected with the rigging broke three times, to the hazard of the lives of some of the seamen. Next morning, (the 26th,) the first news brought into the cabin was, that the land lay broad upon the beam ; at eleven we were off Buchan-ness, and in the evening we were within sight of the Bell Rock. Throughout this day my intercourse with God was open, my meditations were sweet, and my gratitude for past mercies was lively.

“ 27th.—Through the good providence of God, I have reached home in safety, and have had the felicity of finding my family all well. We were in Leith Roads by ten o’clock, and by eleven I landed at New Haven, having been only forty-seven hours on the passage. At

twelve I took coach for Glasgow, which I reached by five: just a month and a day from the time I started. I am called to sing of mercy and judgment; for the loving-kindnesses of my gracious God have been endlessly varied, and numerous beyond expression. I have been preserved from the appearance of danger, and from the shadow of fear; my strength has been according to my day, and a delightful sense of the Divine presence has cheered me in all my ways. My intercourse with my brethren has been profitable; my communion with the people has been sweet; and my privations not worthy to be named, while my mercies call for shouts of praise, and a life of entire devotedness. I have seen nature in some of its sublimest aspects, society in its primitive simplicity, and piety prospering amidst the deepest poverty. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.'

'In all my ways Thy hand I own,
Thy ruling Providence I see:
Assist me still my course to run,
And still direct my paths to Thee.'"

CHAPTER SIXTH.

FAILING HEALTH—LONDON.

THE Conference of 1835 was held in Sheffield ; and then, in compliance with the invitation of the Circuit-stewards, he was appointed to City Road, London. But the excessive labour and excitement of the four previous months had affected his constitution, and soon after reaching his new circuit his health began to fail ; so that, instead of the active and zealous labourer, we have now to consider him rather as the resigned and patient sufferer under the will of his Master. He writes,

“LONDON, October 1st, 1835.—My duties in the circuit are more numerous and engrossing than I can give you any idea of ; but I hope to go through them with pleasure to myself, and some degree of profit to others. You will remember my frequent preaching during the sittings of Conference. My excitement in these services was great. The weather being warm, I perspired excessively, and somehow or other I caught cold, which left a tightness at my chest, and a hoarseness in my voice, from which I have not yet got free. On my return to Glasgow from Zetland, I had to do double duty, in the way of preaching farewell sermons, and in making up for the absence of one of my brethren ; and since my coming here, I have had at least three anniversary services each week, besides supplying occasionally for Mr. Bowers, who, I am sorry to say, has been laid up these three weeks. I long for a little respite, but fear it is far off.”

March 22nd, 1836.—Referring to the agitation then prevalent, he observes, “As you say, we have got into the fire in our circuit, and when we shall get out we know not. We have to contend with a combination of malice, power, and activity of the fiercest character; but, thank God, we are armed for the conflict, and are saved from tormenting fear. My papers on the Zetland mission, you will perceive, have produced a very general and salutary effect. To God be all the glory. I have for the last month had my mind seriously affected about the necessity of our laying the present state of our Connexion to heart, and of endeavouring to turn the whole to some general and practical improvement. At brief and interrupted intervals I strung a few paragraphs together with this in view, and through the kindness of the editor they will appear in the next Magazine. They are far from being what the necessity of the case demands; but I hope that by the blessing of the Most High, which I have often implored, they will do some good. The title is, ‘Old Methodism.’ You will find that I have availed myself of something from your Hull Missionary Report; but you will, I doubt not, forgive the plagiarism. I often wonder at my own presumption in thus venturing before the public, and am ready to say of this, as of each preceding venture, it will be the last.”

During this spring he was persuaded to assist at some important missionary anniversary services, in which, as usual, he exerted himself without restraint. But these excessive labours brought his chest complaint to a crisis; and medical advice being taken, it was concluded, that, in order to secure his restoration to health, a complete rest from all public duties was necessary for several months.

We next find him an invalid, at the house of his friend Mr. Buttress at Sewardstone, from which he writes, to Mrs. M'Owan, as follows, under date of May 19th :—

“My ride to Sewardstone was brief, but very pleasant; and my comforts in the family are as numerous

as affluence and loving solicitude can make them. Indeed, my chief danger arises from the superabundance of the good things devised for the improvement of my health. I wish to place myself entirely under Mrs. Buttress's control and management; but I am obliged sometimes to interpose a little bit of self-will.

"Thus far about the body, and now concerning the soul. I feel that I need a deep and extensive cure here also. I have lived in a hurry. I have been too little conversant with the Book of God and my own heart. My secret devotions have been too short and superficial... I will not attempt to put the estimate I have formed of myself and of my services into words; for they cannot set it forth. Only, I take refuge in the wounds of Jesus. Whether my present affliction is about to be removed, or shall be commissioned to make me halt for life, I know not; but I am full of hope that God will make it a blessing to my soul. You must not think I am gloomy. I am serious, but not sad."

Writing to me on the next day, he says:—

"I WRITE this from a lovely spot in the Waltham Abbey circuit, whither I have been obliged to retire for the recruiting of my health, which has been very infirm through the winter, and, indeed, ever since Conference. When I saw you and your dear family at the close of the year, you will remember I had a cough, accompanied with hoarseness. From that affection I have never got clear; and at times have been led to entertain very gloomy views respecting the premature close of my public labours. I am, thanks to the Most High, *better*, and have the prospect of complete recovery.

"The part which I took in the Queen Street missionary meeting was far from voluntary. My judgment said that I ought to keep silent; but the Secretaries, owing to some disappointments, would take no denial. The effort, though puny in all respects, did me, in my feeble state, much harm.

"The Book Committee, at a recent meeting, resolved to print the paper on 'Old Methodism' as a separate

pamphlet. It will be ready in this form by the close of the month. I have thus the satisfaction of knowing that it has the approbation of my brethren; and what is more gratifying still, that it has done good to some immortal souls. There are a few other points which have dwelt for some time on my mind, and which I may perhaps embody in another paper, should health be given, and Divine assistance be vouchsafed. Perhaps you will be kind enough to suggest some new topics, with your mature thoughts upon them. I may well be ashamed to speak of myself in connection with the meanest attempt at authorship."

About this time he received the following letter of comfort and sympathy:—

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,

"WITH feelings of love to you as my spiritual father, and of sorrow for the affliction with which it has pleased our Heavenly Father to visit you, and feeling assured that you will pardon the liberty I have taken, I address a few lines to you. O, my dear Sir, my pen would fail me, were I to try to describe my feelings on the present occasion! About three months back, I was invited to hear you preach at Liverpool-Road chapel. It was the first time in my life I had entered a Methodist chapel. On that morning, whilst listening to your sermon, which was from 2 Cor. xii. 7, the Lord blessed your labour, for I became thoroughly convinced of sin. That afternoon I was invited to attend Mr. Nicholson's class, at which you were present to renew their tickets; and while hearing the different members speak their experience of God's love, I became the subject of deeper convictions of my guilty and hopeless condition. I then and there resolved to seek the salvation of my soul earnestly; and, glory be to His Holy name, in about three weeks God set my soul at liberty, and I have been rejoicing in His free, boundless love ever since. O may the Lord raise you up again to be a blessing to His people! Many have opposed my joining the Methodists; but I feel they are God's people, and I am fully resolved they shall be my choice.

"I sincerely join with our Society in earnest prayer to God, that He may be pleased to restore you to us again; that you may again stand up to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ to a people whom you love, and by whom you are greatly beloved. Hoping you will pardon me for intruding so long on your valuable time,

"I remain,
 "With sincere love and respect,
 "Yours affectionately,
 "R. D."

About the same time he also received the following letter :—

"LONDON, 1836. .

"DEAR SIR,

"I HAVE pleasure in discharging a debt of love, and tendering the assurance of my most affectionate regard. I shall ever have reason to esteem you very highly in love for your work's sake. Your labours in former years were blessed by God to me, and were instrumental in leading to my salvation.

"I had long attended the Methodist ministry; but was, like many others, only a way-side hearer, until it pleased God by your preaching in the chapels of Wilderness Row and Spitalfields to reveal the thoughts and intents of my unconverted heart. I became as slain by the two-edged sword of the Spirit, and trembled at His word: and though I did not then see the simple way of faith, yet I ever bless the Lord for those convictions. They were to me the beginning of spiritual life, and prepared the way for adoption into His family by faith, in which I now stand. I entreat you to remember me in prayer, and plead that I may be built up in knowledge, faith, and holiness, and that as a son I may serve the Lord, and abide in His house for ever.

"I earnestly pray that the ministry you have received of the Lord Jesus may be abundantly owned and blessed

to His honour and glory. And whilst you make the glory and excellence of Christ your chief theme, it shall be so.

‘Bent on such glorious toils,
The world to you be loss;
And all your trophies, all your spoils,
Be hung upon the Cross.’

“I trust you will never discontinue your wonted and fervent application of your subject. I believe this is the secret of useful preaching.

“Accept the assurance of respect and esteem.

“Yours very sincerely,

“J. E.”

To his wife, under date of Southampton, June 18th, 1836, he writes as follows :—

“THE morning I parted from you was cloudy, a proper index to the state of my mind. The few drops of rain which occasionally fell just served to remind us of our dependence on God, who gives us rain and fruitful seasons. The country, though new to me, did not appear generally interesting. In the neighbourhood of Winchester, the fields were sown with a species of fitch, which bore a fine crimson flower, forming a striking contrast to the rich green fields on either side. Winchester, with its ancient cathedral, is finely situated in a well-watered valley, guarded on two sides by high lands, which in the neighbourhood are called chalk-hills.

“We reached Southampton about nine P.M. Mr. Taylor’s letter introduced me to Mr. L. and his kind family, who gave ready proof that they are ‘not forgetful to entertain strangers.’

“Southampton is an ancient and rather elegant town. And if plenty of wood and water, gently rising grounds, and genteel residences, can make a neighbourhood interesting, its vicinity is so. The entrance from London is through a noble avenue of lofty lime trees, which at this season is alike impervious to summer showers and the rays of a summer’s sun. The new pier surpasses any similar erection I have seen, and is said to be the finest in the kingdom. For this I do

not feel disposed to vouch. Two rivers pour their tributary waters into the bay which forms the harbour, and at flood-tide vessels of almost any burden come in. With such facilities for commerce, it is expected that the formation of the railroad, and the erection of a floating bridge on the Portsmouth side of the river, will greatly increase its commercial importance.

“Respecting our morning meeting at the throne of grace I must confess my faults; for though I have been awake, I have felt so weary that I have been unable to fulfil the engagement which I was the first to propose. A later hour will suit me better, and it will be my endeavour to give myself to the duty more than I have ever done. I grieve that my affliction has not had a more sanctified effect on my mind, feelings, and general views. God ‘does not afflict the children of men willingly.’ All His purposes are holy as well as wise, and I am deeply conscious that I need purifying. I have a strong presentiment, that my recovery, as to speed and completeness, will very much depend on my increase in holiness. Perhaps He intends that you and our dear children should also be quickened in the pursuit of holiness by my affliction. May the good Lord ‘work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure!’

“As ever, your affectionate husband.”

The same day he wrote to me:—

“I AM here in the character of an invalid. The hope expressed in my last of my being soon able to resume my wonted labour, has not been realized. The medical opinions I have obtained agree in this, that a considerable degree of inflammation in the region of the lungs has taken place, and that a total cessation from labour is absolutely necessary. On Tuesday next I go on to Guernsey, and shall regulate my stay according to circumstances. The possibility of being obliged to sit down for a year sometimes flits across my mind like a dark shadow. I am endeavouring to meet God in the way of His judgments, but find myself a very unapt scholar. Help me by your prayers.”

His next letter is addressed to his wife :—

ST. PETER'S, GUERNSEY, *June 23rd*, 1836.

“THE dear family with whom I stayed in Southampton continued their loving assiduities up to the hour I left them. Their carriage was in requisition each day for the increase of my pleasure and the improvement of my health ; and by this means I saw more of the neighbourhood than I could otherwise have done. In one of our excursions we visited Netley Abbey, a splendid ruin. On Sunday I heard two interesting sermons from Mr. Sibly, by which my mind was greatly refreshed, though my body was weak and languid, especially in the evening. On Monday we rode about eighteen miles through a fertile district, abounding with much that was lovely, though exhibiting little that was grand. On Tuesday I spent as much time as I could secure in private, supplicating blessings on my host and hostess. I was as a dog in my own eyes, and wondered that God or man should show me such kindness. I felt unworthy of the least of all the Divine favours, and had much pleasure in referring the whole to the precious blood and prevalent intercession of my great High Priest. In the course of a short ride in the afternoon, we passed the tomb of Robert Pollok, the poet, who came to Southampton, on his way to the Continent, in quest of health ; but being unable to proceed further, he tarried till the angelic convoy came to carry his sainted spirit to those regions of whose glorious joys he had so often sung.

“In the evening I went on board the packet. The weather was rather hazy, and the river somewhat rough ; so I had small opportunity of observing the beauty of the land scenery, which, when favourably viewed, is very interesting. The night was unusually rough, not to say stormy. In the midst of it I had a soothing hope in Him

‘ Who rides upon the stormy sky,
And calms the roaring seas.’

Though under no alarm, I had pleasure in reflecting that, should the waves cover us, there was a Book of

Life, in which I had some reason to believe my name was written. When we went on board, we had hoped to reach Guernsey by seven in the morning, but, owing to the contrary wind, we did not gain the harbour till past noon. The captain was a member of our Society, and I found on board two daughters of the late Mr. Button, (one of them far gone in consumption,) who were going to the island. With them I had some profitable conversation; and on landing we found Mrs. de Queteville waiting to receive them. As I had a letter to her father, I was invited to dine at their house; and ultimately they contrived that I should be their guest by day, and sleep at the house of a relative close by at night. Hitherto, you perceive, I have had to sing of goodness and mercy. The weather has not been very propitious, and consequently I have not improved so much as might have been expected.

“The town is built on the side of a steep hill, and, when viewed from the sea, has a majestic and garri-son-like aspect. The island in general is hilly, and, being fruitful, has a very rich and charming appearance. The people say the summer is all to come, and I am encouraged to hope for cloudless skies, balmy breezes, and almost Arcadian scenes. For all good things I shall endeavour to be thankful; but my hope is in the Lord who made heaven and earth; and my greatest joy will be to get back to the bosom of my family, and to my regular work.”

On the 30th of the same month he writes again:—

“I HAVE great reason to be thankful to Providence for directing me to the kind family with whom I lodge. They are most assiduous in ministering to my comfort. The weather is now fine, and I become daily more enamoured with the island. Poor Miss Button, after a temporary revival, has become much worse. Being truly pious, she is sweetly resigned to the will of God. My own mind is generally preserved in a calm, happy frame: and I have pleasure in commending you, with my dear children, and the cause of God to His care, who condescendingly calls Himself ‘the Keeper of Israel.’”

And about a week after to his children :—

“I WRITE to tell you that I was much gratified by receiving your letters, and through them to know that you were well, and that you did not forget to pray for my recovery and safe return. You have not prayed in vain, as the following circumstance will show. When the packet in which I sailed came into the bay, the state of the tide did not permit her to enter the harbour; and the passengers consequently had to be conveyed on shore in small boats. The boat which I hired for the Misses Button and myself came alongside the steamer, with many others, and the sea being rough, much confusion ensued. Just as I was stepping into the boat, a wave drove it off from the side of the packet, despite the efforts of the men to hold it fast. A moment's hesitation whether to cling to the vessel, or throw myself into the boat, increased my danger; but adopting the latter alternative, I escaped with nothing worse than breaking my umbrella, and having my hat steeped in the sea. The circumstance was observed by only a few of the passengers, and it was over in a moment; but it was a providential deliverance. ‘In the midst of life we are in death: of whom may we seek for help, but from Thee, O Lord, who, for our sins, art justly displeased?’

“Guernsey is about nine miles long, and five broad. The shore is rocky, and in some parts the scenery is bold and interesting. Its contiguity to France led our government during the late war to fortify it on all sides, and certainly, if we take into account the dangerous character of its coast, with its numerous well-built forts, it is very strong. It is pleasing to reflect that these fortifications are now useless, the nations of Europe being linked in the bonds of a general peace. In one castle, capable of containing fifteen hundred men, there are only two soldiers. In Fort George, which is still larger, there is only a single company of artillery; and last evening we saw a range of barracks on the north-west side of the island, which has been sold to the gentry of the town for summer residences. So it is to be hoped we are not far from

the period when nation shall no more lift up sword against nation.

“The population amounts to about twenty-five thousand souls; fifteen hundred are members of the Methodist Society. The French language is principally spoken, though most of the people in the town are familiar with English. The soil is rich, and the productions of the island are various and abundant. The crops of wheat, etc., are excellent. Every kind of fruit found in England grows here luxuriantly. Strawberries are very abundant. Mr. de Queteville’s garden has yielded between fifty and sixty pounds daily for the last fortnight. Oranges grow on the walls of the houses and gardens. Fig-trees are common, and they produce quantities of large, choice fruit. One evening this week, I was one of a party who took tea literally under the vine and fig-tree; we sang many hymns, and none made us afraid. The fig-tree spreads its branches to a great distance; and when supported by trellis-work, or a sufficient number of props, it forms an excellent and pleasant shade. Sometimes the vine and fig-tree mingle their branches, and intertwine their delicious fruit, forming an arbour through which the rays of the sun cannot pierce. As for flowers, I could fill a sheet in setting forth their beauties, but time forbids. I have seen some geraniums in full flower, covering the wall of a house up to the slates. The same applies to myrtles.

“I had intended to have given you an account of Methodism here; but the boy has called for the letters, and I can only tell you that I have dined to-day in a house where Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke, and Dr. Clarke have often been. On the opposite side of the court is a small chapel which Mr. Wesley opened; and till lately there stood in the garden a pear-tree in which Dr. Clarke fixed a seat, with a book-board, where he often sat and studied.

“I have to request that you will continue to be good children, and do not forget to pray for yourselves and me. Present my warmest love to dear Mamma.”

*To J. Buttress, Esq.**

“VERY DEAR SIR,

“GRATITUDE for multiplied kindnesses has often prompted me to write to you from this lovely retreat ; but I postponed the duty, in hope of soon being able to announce my complete recovery. I am happy to say, that my health is much improved, though I cannot conclude that it would be safe for me to enter at once on the performance of my regular duties. I grieve to ‘eat the bread of idleness,’ and find it a heavy trial to be from month to month ‘an ambassador in bonds.’ The trial is, however, mitigated by the assurance that my Christian friends do not grudge me the rest which my circumstances require. The great kindness with which my family has been treated in my absence, and the interest which we have had in the prayers of our people, have also been subjects of daily thanksgiving to me in my retirement. In this island, too, ‘the lines have fallen to me in pleasant places.’ I have also been favoured with the companionship of my dear brother M’Lean for the last week, who is in circumstances very similar to my own. I was informed that a number of our people in the island had set apart an hour in the day to pray for our recovery and restoration to our ministerial work. This is an additional proof that the King of saints still cares for us. I am full of hope that by the close of September I shall be able, by the blessing of God, to take a portion of my work, if not the entire round, with perfect safety ; and I trust I shall be able to evidence that my afflictions have been sanctified by increased fidelity in the service of God, and in entire resignation to His will.”

To Mrs. M’Owan he wrote as follows, on July 7th, 1836:—

“Your last letter, with the letters of our dear children, furnished additional matter for thanksgiving. You are

*At that time one of the Circuit-stewards of the City-Road circuit.

all well. Glory be to the most High ! May His angels have charge over you ; and may His salvation be your solace and joy ! I find you both near and dear when pleading for you at the throne of grace.

“I am happy to inform you that all my unfavourable symptoms are mitigated. Though I am far from being satisfied with my improvement in piety, I am not without hope that, with health restored, I shall live to advance the glory of God. I have a deepened conviction of the supreme importance of true religion on the one hand, and of the utter insignificance and insufficiency of all that the world calls great and good, on the other. O, 'tis a solemn thing for a man under the influence of disease to contemplate the termination of his labours and life, and the commencement of his eternal state in the invisible world ! *Nothing whatever*, but a conscious interest in the infinite atonement of the all-sufficient Saviour, can then inspire hope or afford rest to the soul. Blessed be God, this alone has been my solace, my confidence, and my joy !

“I rejoice that you adhere so closely to the hour for retirement. The discoveries we make in the closet are always humbling ; but on this very account they are profitable. Should God spare us to each other, we must live to more purpose. We have been happy in each other, but we have not been so useful to one another as we might have been. I hope God will spare me to help you to get nearer to the throne, and to be more abundantly filled with the joys of His salvation.”

And again, a week afterwards :—

“I RECEIVED your last valued parcel, and return you a loving husband's hearty thanks for it, and for making my dear brother M^rLean the bearer of it. We met in the house of prayer on the morning of the Sabbath ; and it is difficult to say whether his surprise at finding me in the pulpit, or mine at seeing him on one of the forms, was greatest. You are surprised at *my being in the pulpit*, and for your satisfaction I will explain.

Having determined to leave Guernsey in the course of the ensuing week, and feeling, as I thought, considerably improved, I yielded to the importunity of Mr. Bustard (the Superintendent) and other kind friends, who requested me to give them a sermon, however short. My motives in this matter were of a mixed character. I was influenced by considerations of gratitude to my kind entertainers; besides, I had been haunted by a distressing fear lest God had taken for ever His word out of my mouth, and rescinded my commission to preach the Gospel; and I secretly, but strongly, desired an opportunity of having this painful doubt resolved by actual experiment. And lastly, I thought, *one prudent trial* would enable me to come to a more correct conclusion respecting my fitness to enter on my regular circuit duties on my return to London. With these views and feelings I preached last Sunday morning, after Mr. Bustard had prayed and read the Lessons. The result was, if you will admit the paradox, both pleasing and painful. My spirit was refreshed. I proved, as formerly, that preaching was to me a means of grace; and was satisfied that my affliction was a fatherly correction, not a wrathful rejection. O the luxury and privilege of proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ! I felt as in my native element, and knew that the Most High did not reckon me an intruder. Though I imposed a restraint upon myself throughout the whole service, I was sadly prostrated during the whole day; and at night felt so feverish, that all endeavours to procure sleep were unavailing. I watched the departure of the last gleam of evening light, and was nearly as wakeful to welcome the first streak of opening day. I was, indeed, full of tossings to and fro till the dawning of the day. I rose late, and felt ill. Indeed, I then concluded that my ministerial course was run; and so fully did this impression possess my mind, that I was unable to abstain from tears in the family, and could not conduct their worship. Mr. de Queteville talked to me like a father and an apostle. I saw my duty, and my privilege; and, retiring to my room, entered on communion

with God of the most hallowed and happy kind. I could fill a sheet with the humbling, yet satisfying manifestations of that hour, but must abstain for want of room. Suffice it to say, that I was enabled to make an entire surrender of my person, spirit, ministry, and family into the hands of my loving Lord, who ruleth in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. I felt assured that He would order all things for the best, and the arrangements of His will seemed to be infinitely preferable to any devisings of mine. I saw that, great as my unfaithfulness had been, He could pardon it all; and with this, there was given a sweet, inwrought persuasion that it would not be suffered to stand as an absolute barrier to the re-commencement of my ministry. I had no distinct conviction that I should be fully restored; but the hope that this would be the case was revived, and it became a *hope in God*, rather than in medicines and physicians. I felt as if the Lord took my case into His own hands; and I said, with the utmost latitude of meaning which the words will bear, 'The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.'"

His case had now reached its crisis. His health might be restored, but it must not be further tested. The trial at Guernsey was perhaps unwise; but when the motives he assigns are considered, how can we blame him? But it proved a failure, and dissipated all the hopes arising from the slight improvement he had made. He felt now that he was unfit for the work of a circuit for the following year. This was his first year in the City-Road circuit, and during much of it he had been an invalid: he could, therefore, urge no claim on that circuit for a second year's appointment. His way seemed shut up, and a dark cloud rested upon it. There was, indeed, one course open to him, he might request permission to retire for a year. But on various accounts, that was much to be deprecated by himself and family. The Conference, too, was just

at hand; and before the month could pass, the case must be decided. He was in the prime of life, just forty years of age; his love for his work was a ruling passion; and with a burning desire to resume it, need we wonder that his soul was so deeply moved? The venerable John de Queteville, then in his seventieth year, who had suffered much persecution in his Master's service, and had been a zealous and useful minister for half a century, could and did sympathize with his junior brother. "He talked to me like a father and an apostle." The junior felt as a son in the Gospel. He saw where his strength and refuge lay; and with heart overwhelmed he went to his God, and poured out his heart before Him. His brief account of that "humbling and satisfying" communion is a remarkable record. He made the necessary and complete surrender. He cast his whole burden on the Lord, and he found rest to his disquieted soul. He felt that God undertook his cause; and though as yet he could not tell how deliverance would come, he was assured that light would arise in the darkness, and that the will of the Lord would be infinitely preferable to "any devisings of" his.

He had not to wait long to find that God was a "very present help in trouble." A few days after the date of the above interesting letter he reached home in safety, and sent me the following letter, dated London, July 22nd, 1836 :—

"ACCEPT of my grateful acknowledgment for your brotherly and sympathetic letter to my dear Jane during my absence. I left Guernsey last Monday, and reached London on Wednesday evening. My general health is greatly improved, and bad symptoms connected with the chest are all greatly mitigated. Since my return I have undergone a medical examination, and

my lungs are now pronounced permeable to the air throughout. It is certain that tubercles are not formed, and the signs of inflammation are abated. The prospect of my ultimate recovery is, of course, brightened; but my medical advisers, with one voice, enjoin upon me months of comparative repose and silence. This is a great trial, but submission is my duty, and the grace of God is sufficient. The prospect of being permitted again to set forth the saving plan, and publish the Saviour's praise, is like marrow and fatness to my soul.

“Before I left Guernsey, my way seemed hedged up. A mist hung upon the future, and I came up to London without being able to define any feasible plan for the ensuing year. I felt assured that I was the object of the Divine care, and hoped that my path would be made plain, but had no light respecting the mode in which my case could be satisfactorily met. About an hour after I reached home, Mr. Taylor, my Superintendent, and Messrs. Buttress and Hunter, our two circuit-stewards, called: and after mutual consultation, they agreed to request Conference that the assistant editor should be appointed to take my Sunday work till it be deemed safe for me to resume my labours; my week-evening engagements to be divided among my brethren. In addition to this, they agreed that we should leave our present house in Bache's Row, and remove to another at Stoke Newington, as soon as circumstances would permit.

“Such is the kindness with which your unworthy brother is likely to be treated. O for grace to make me sufficiently grateful! Many of my esteemed fathers and brethren, whose shoes' latchet I am unworthy to unloose, have been obliged to stand at the post of duty till they fell down and died, while I, a loiterer, and utterly unworthy, am spared, and, as it were, dandled on the knee. The Conference may object to the arrangement; but it is not likely they will.”

Thus with a fair prospect of restoration to health, he

was made easy respecting the ensuing year. A wise and merciful Providence had so ordered it, that at such a time of trial his lot should be cast among a kind and generous people, who took a deep interest in his case, and did all in their power to soothe his mind and promote his recovery. But as his constitution had been seriously injured by excessive pulpit exertion, it required time, patience, and care, with strict attention to medical advice, fully to restore the shattered fabric. The Conference kindly consented to the proposal of the stewards; and he was left at liberty to employ his time in that way which seemed most likely to promote the end in view.

Soon after Conference he spent a short time with us at Northampton; and as his friend the Rev. Joseph Taylor had now removed from London to Worcester, he crossed the country, and visited him and his family. From Worcester he writes to Mrs. M'Owan, under date of October 2nd, 1836 :—

“By the good providence of God, I have reached this town in safety. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor have received me with that frank hospitality for which they are so remarkable. I left Northampton yesterday. The country was very interesting, particularly about Dunchurch, where we entered Warwickshire. Besides other beauties here, we rode for six miles under a lofty avenue of ancient trees, partly elm, but chiefly fir. I recollected that this was your dear father's county, and this led to some pleasant musings on the wisdom and goodness of that Providence which brought me from the centre of Perthshire to become his son-in-law, and a minister of the glorious Gospel. I felt grateful for you, for our dear children, for the prospect of lengthened life, and the hope of a renewal of ministerial labour; but especially for the grace of God, of which we all are in some degree partakers.

“The moon rose beautifully after we passed Coventry, and formed a new subject of pleasing meditation, which I was enabled to mingle with prayer for myself and mine. About a quarter past nine we reached Birmingham.

“The ride to-day has been as pleasant as it could be on such a rainy day. The orchards were still rich in fruit, and the blackberries, I observed, were very abundant. I thought on our little folks, and the pleasure they would have had, if placed in the midst of them on a fine day. I saw a little boy looking out of the window of a cottage, whose appearance brought Peter to my remembrance. A poor soldier, who had been hurt by the kick of a horse, was handed into the coach, which circumstance opened a new subject for gratitude that I had been brought so far in safety. Throughout the whole journey I felt God near, and was enabled to praise and pray.”

As he gathered strength he became impatient to resume his work; and on his return from Worcester, in compliance with his request, his case was again professionally considered with this in view. The result he communicates to me under date of October 18th, 1836 :—

“I LOSE no time in informing you, that after another professional consultation on my case, the deliberate decision is, that I may safely remain in the vicinity of London during the winter, if I prefer it. This is to me, on many accounts, a joyful decision. The former interdict on my preaching has been renewed and confirmed, and to this I submit; glad that I may have some pastoral intercourse with our people, and generally enjoy the sweet comforts of home. To God be the glory! May my lengthened life show how much I owe, how much I love!

“My residence will be for the most part at Stoke Newington; but whether in the family of one of our friends, or in a cottage taken for the purpose, I am

unable to say. The matter is in the hands of the stewards, and they are prepared to do the best. What a mercy, that my lot was cast at this crisis among such a people !”

But the sky is soon overcast again ; for, on November 3rd, he writes from Stoke Newington :—

“I AM sorry for the delay which has occurred in replying to your last favour. The severity of the weather, my residence in the country, and the sudden increase of my chest disorder, which I am obliged to own, will, I doubt not, sufficiently excuse me in your brotherly estimation....The premature commencement of winter has had a very injurious effect upon my lungs. The cough and difficulty of breathing have returned in considerable strength ; only, the fever and night-sweats are still in abeyance, which I consider as favourable indications. To-day I feel somewhat relieved, having had a pretty good night. I lodge with Mrs. Baynes, sen., and am very comfortable. These relapses damp my spirits greatly, and serve to involve my future prospects in no small degree of gloom. My dear Jane participates largely in my perplexity and disappointment: but the Lord reigneth, and He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. I see many lessons which I have yet to master, and a multitude of defects which need to be repaired. The seclusion which accompanies affliction is doubtless more congenial with spiritual improvement than that kind of service which keeps us before the public eye, and necessitates us to take part in the stir of public business. I believe the present affliction is mercifully designed to form a new era in my Christian experience, as well as in my ministerial character. The design is gracious, and though the means selected are both abasing and embarrassing, they may, on that very account, become increasingly efficacious. If it be a part of the Divine plan, that I should be restored to exercise the functions of my ministry for the benefit of the Church, I shall rejoice, and endeavour to pay

the vows which my lips have uttered when I was in trouble; and if not, I hope to obtain such a supply of the Spirit as will enable me meekly to suffer, and peacefully to wait, till all His will be done. To have admitted me into the ministry at all was an act of infinite condescension, and to have continued me in it under such favourable circumstances is a display of boundless goodness, for which I can never be sufficiently thankful. It is this which endears so much the dying, the risen, and the interceding Saviour to my soul. Were it not for His infinite satisfaction, I feel at times as if I must despair. But,—

‘ His side an open Fountain is,
Where all may freely go ;’

and,

‘ For ever here my rest shall be.’ ”

“ November 26th, 1836.—Accept of my cordial thanks for your sympathetic and truly consoling letter, of which, I must say, the brother breathes in every line. It has been one of my rich and multiplied mercies throughout my protracted affliction, to be favoured with the sympathies and friendship of the excellent of the earth; and none can tell how much this has cheered my mind, and lightened my load of care. When restored to my place in the ministry, I hope to repay the Church in some degree through her suffering members, for the long-sustained and variously-expressed kindness manifested to me in my state of disability. Tender-heartedness is one of the fruits of sanctified affliction; it is lovely in all, but especially in the minister of Jesus: and while God pardons my lack of it in times past, I trust in Him for power to exercise it on all fitting occasions in time to come. Those in health cannot properly estimate the value of a kind word, or a friendly visit; neither can they imagine how easy—I had almost said, how natural—it is for the afflicted to draw matter for self-accusation from instances of neglect. The weakness implied in this is manifest; but the charity which labours to prevent, or at least to palliate, the evil, will in no wise lose its reward.

"We were sorry to learn that affliction had taken such a wide sweep in your own family, and trust that by this time returning health renders your domestic circle complete. While I express this hope, I confess my heart misgives me respecting our mother Townsend. During my residence in your house, I was greatly affected with the visible alteration in her appearance, as contrasted with what she was in December last. I fear the time is not far distant when she must gather up her feet and die. We shall be glad to hear how she is at your earliest convenience."

"December 8th, 1836.—We were deeply affected with the painful intelligence which it was your mournful duty to convey to us yesterday. Though not unanticipated, it was not looked for so soon. We felt sorry that Jane had not remained, that she might not only have had the melancholy pleasure of assisting in closing the eyes of her beloved parent, but also of sharing and lightening the labour and distress which must fall on your dear Christiana.* From many circumstances it is manifest that reason retained her seat to the last, that she knew Jane, and that she felt her mind at peace, resting on the Redeemer. You are no doubt aware, that in answer to inquiries on these points she gently pressed Jane's hand in hers, and sometimes even tried to speak. But her intimate acquaintance with the Gospel, her deep and habitual concern about the work of God, when in health, and the meekness and patience with which she endured so many years of affliction, furnished still more satisfactory evidence that she sleeps in Jesus."

"London, February 16th, 1837.—I am happy to inform you that my prospects of recovery brighten. Tomorrow my dear Jane and I leave for the Isle of Wight, where I shall probably spend about six weeks; after which I confidently hope to be able to resume my public

* Mrs. Townsend, our mother-in-law, had been almost helpless and speechless for ten years, through paralysis, which she bore with exemplary patience, until another stroke at this time terminated her suffering and her life.

duties. I cannot tell you the pleasure this prospect affords me. Brother M'Lean is at present in the isle. We intend to live in the same cottage; and after Jane has instructed and established us somewhat in domestic economy she will return. We calculate on a continued interest in your prayers. Neither brother M'Lean nor I have aught to pay here for lodgings, the expense of the cottage being paid for by his Derbyshire friends, who have kindly included me in the arrangement. This, also, is the Lord's doing, and I adore."

"Ventnor, Isle of Wight, March 26th, 1837.—Thanks for your descriptive and eloquent letter. It both instructed and amused us: for by placing your lively imaginings in contrast with our poor performances, we saw the striking difference between a man in health and those in an invalid state. Of the interesting scenes and ancient places to which you refer we had read, but, sluggard like, we have spent weeks in their vicinity without having seen one of them. The spot where we lodge being sheltered from the north and east winds, and our dread of the fierce influence of Boreas, as he comes sweeping from these quarters, induced us to prefer safety at home to the gratification of taste and curiosity abroad. Yesterday, however, a gentleman in the neighbourhood gave us a ride about five miles along the coast, to visit a religious family; and this, alas! is the only ride we have had during our sojourn.

"I would not, however, have you to infer that my case has assumed a more threatening aspect, or even that I have derived no benefit from the visit. I account it a singular mercy to have been led to such a sheltered spot before the severe weather came on, and I believe I may say that I have improved in several particulars. Yet I do not feel myself qualified to enter upon my circuit duties. Since we came here, I have met a small class of our people on Sunday afternoon; and while I am thankful for the ability to go through this little exercise, I am painfully sensible that I have neither voice nor physical strength for preaching. We

intend to return to London to-morrow, or the day following : and to defend myself against myself, and against the counsels of those who might urge me to a premature trial of strength, I purpose to have a new consultation on my case. In this, as in all things, may the Great Physician direct to a right conclusion. I wait in hope. May it also be in patience and submission !

“ I felt it to be my duty in December to resign my place as one of the City-Road preachers, judging that though I might be able to take a circuit at Conference, there was no probability I would be able to do the work of *such a circuit*. The Quarterly Meeting, at the suggestion of the stewards, kindly postponed the consideration of the question till March, hoping that I might be so improved as to warrant my continuance among them. My opinion on the subject remains unchanged ; and I have written to say, that I cannot entertain any reasonable hope of being able to undertake the full labour of one of their preachers. This also is painful ; but the Lord reigneth. As this renders our removal to Stoke Newington unnecessary, my dear Jane has remained with us here, which has greatly contributed to my comfort, as well as to that of brother M'Lean. His case, I am sorry to say, is far worse than mine ; indeed, my conviction is, that his public labours have closed. He was greatly delighted with your letter, and sends his affectionate regards. He grows in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

“ I forget whether I informed you that we had sent our Christiana to the Misses Allbut's school at Meriden. She went at the close of the Christmas vacation, and since we came to this island we have had a letter from her, giving an artless, but satisfactory, account of her conversion. By this gracious dispensation God has given us songs in the night season. Nine of her schoolmates found peace about the same time. I hope our other children are ripening for a similar change. O that the children of both families may speedily be led to give their whole hearts to God ! mutual prayer on this

subject will, I trust, prevail. Remember us still in your prayers before Him who comforts the distressed, and who directs the paths of His people."

"London, April 18th, 1837.—We are again surrounded with the comforts of home. On my return from the Isle of Wight I was congratulated by my friends generally on my improved personal appearance. The medical opinions I obtained were favourable: only, both the gentlemen consulted positively forbade any attempts at preaching until the arrival of milder weather. I have, however, delivered two short addresses in prayer-meetings, with which I got through pretty well, and I am living in hope of greater things."

"May 29th.—The state of my health has fluctuated since I last wrote. But, thanks to my Heavenly Father, I am now better; and have not only met classes, but yesterday I attempted to preach. The mental effort in preparation for the work, and the anticipation of again appearing in the pulpit, shook me greatly. My text was Psalm ciii. 1-5. My voice was weak, and I not only deemed it prudent, but found it necessary, to speak under great restraint, so that it was a lame beginning. But it was a beginning; and though I feel greatly exhausted, I am not sensibly worse to-day. As you may judge, the circumstance fills us with great gladness. Perfect soundness I do not calculate upon; but such a measure of health as will enable me to keep in the ministry, though in much more retired stations, will be a favour from the Lord, for which I shall be eternally thankful. O how I long to be useful, and how I regret the imperfect improvement of former opportunities!"

Little did he or his City-Road friends anticipate that their extraordinary kindness to him should, by the blessing of God, be the means, not only of restoring him to his former prominent position in the ministry of the Connexion, but that he should be sustained in that position for thirty-one additional years,—a period

longer by eleven years than he had previously been in the work. As the years passed away, it must have afforded high gratification to them, to see that the kindness they had shown to the minister was thus honoured by the Great Master. While we write, it is gratifying to see that measures worthy of the Connexion are adopted to provide for all such cases in future.* This will produce unspeakable comfort and relief to the ministers and their families in their affliction, and will, no doubt, in many instances, prolong valuable life and labour.

At the close of his letter, dated March 26th, he mentioned the receipt of one from his eldest daughter, at school, giving an account of her conversion. Thinking it best to conclude the subject of his recovery, we now introduce his admirable reply to that cheering communication.

“ VENTNOR, ISLE OF WIGHT, *March 2nd, 1837.*

“ MY DEAR CHRISTIANA,

“ WE received your welcome letter duly, and read its precious contents with tears of joy, thanksgivings to God, and many prayers for your establishment in the life of faith ; on the duties and enjoyments of which, we doubt not, you have at length entered. Though we had often prayed for your conversion, the news of its having actually taken place filled us with some degree of surprise. Indeed, our prayers were so much mixed with unbelief, that we sometimes feared lest God should punish our unfaithfulness, by permitting you to grow up to years of maturity without obtaining a share in the blessings of the Covenant. But God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, neither are His ways as our ways. The measure of our merit has never formed the rule of His procedure with our family. Goodness and mercy have followed your parents all their days, and we regard your ‘second birth’ as a new and transcending

* See Minutes of Conference, 1870.

instance of the Divine favour and condescension towards our household. You are now our 'first-born' in a double sense; and we trust your union with the Saviour will prove the prelude of a similar union between Him and the other branches of the family. As a means of securing this, we earnestly pray that He would enable you to be faithful, diligent, and prayerful.

"We rejoice that you felt the burden of sin to be truly intolerable. A thorough knowledge of our disease prepares us for a perfect cure; and while a distressing sense of our vileness and utter helplessness disposes us to give God the undivided glory of our salvation, it also serves as an antidote against self-dependence, and a return to our former ways. By drinking deeply of the wormwood and the gall our sympathy towards them that mourn is awakened, our capability to comfort and instruct them is increased, and our usefulness is consequently promoted.

"Your affectionate and fervent aspirations for the conversion of your brother and sisters are perfectly consistent with the change you have experienced; and we trust you will ever bear in mind that God has kindled the lamp of His grace in your heart, to the intent that, being enlightened yourself, you may, by His aid, enlighten others. The power of God alone can convert the soul; but He frequently effects the wondrous work by means of the believing prayers, the consistent lives and the faithful testimony, of His people. The lisping of the new-born soul, while narrating the circumstances connected with its translation from darkness to light, the incidents which served to hasten the crisis of its union with the Lord of life, together with its mental exercises, both before and after the moment of its deliverance, have in numberless instances been blessed to the comforting of those who stood afar off, on the supposition that God would put forth His power, in some miraculous way, before they could possibly be saved. By such statements, too, the simplicity of the way of faith is

seen, salvation is proved to be the privilege of the 'chief of sinners' who believe, and God is impressively represented in His character of essential Love.

"For these and other reasons, I wish my dear girl to keep a particular account of the way in which God has led her to the 'wealthy place' which she now occupies under the protecting shadow of her covenant Lord. Such a record will be a 'Stone of Remembrance' in after days; it will strengthen your faith, and cheer your heart in seasons of despondency; it will form a repository of your best and holiest thoughts, and it will perpetuate those circumstances and feelings which, though minute in themselves, are necessary to a complete representation of the compassion and abounding love of the ever-blessed God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Do not, on the one hand, write so often, or so much, as to make the duty burdensome; and, on the other hand, do not suffer such intervals to intervene as will render your conscience uneasy, or your recollection indistinct. Perhaps a weekly entry is all at which you should aim at present. Never go to it, or your class, without having first gone to God in simple, earnest prayer, beseeching Him to shine on His own work, to give you a right understanding in all things to enable you to testify to His grace, and to make your testimony a blessing to yourself and others. Those impressions which are made on your mind, and those blessings which are communicated to your soul, through the instrumentality of the Word, whether read or preached, ought to be recorded with special care; for they generally humble us, and exalt Him from whom they descend. It is of advantage to a young disciple to have a faithful friend and a judicious adviser, to whom the exercises of the soul can at all times, and with the most confiding trust, be divulged; and if my dear Christiana will make me her confidant in all such matters, it will be my most solicitous endeavour to furnish her, from time to time, with such instructions, cautions, and consolations as she may need, and as I may be able to communicate.

"I am happy to say, that my prospect of restoration to health and usefulness brightens."

"VENTNOR, ISLE OF WIGHT, *March 22nd, 1837.*

"MY DEAR CHILDREN,

"My last letter was very serious, and I hope you gave it that attention which the importance of the subject demanded. I have prayed much for your conversion, and hope you will never rest till the all-important change has passed upon your souls. Religion is indeed, 'the one thing needful.'

"I intend to devote this sheet to a description of some things connected with the island, in compliance with a wish expressed in Jane's letter.....History states that the island was once so covered with wood, that the squirrels, which were then numerous, were able to travel through its length and breadth on the branches of the trees. Much of the land is now cultivated; the forest trees are sadly diminished in number by means of storms and the process of decay; and the poor squirrels are nearly, if not quite, extinct. Extensive coppice woods still exist, and in them are found pretty little dormice, which sleep during winter, and live upon the buds of plants in spring, and upon nuts, etc., during summer and autumn. They are now waking up from their long sleep, and are coming out of their warm nests.

"Undercliffe, where we reside, is a tract of land bounded by the sea on the south, and by the cliff on the north; being generally about a mile in breadth. The cliff presents the appearance of the walls of an old castle: it is many hundred feet in height, curiously fretted into rockwork, and adorned with abundance of ivy and other creeping plants. The dells and ravines which run towards the sea are watered by limpid streams, which often descend in little cascades from the rocks, and their sheltered banks are beautified by violets, cowslips, and primroses. We often think, as we walk along, how delighted you would be to gather

these pretty harbingers of spring. Yesterday, when your mother walked out, she was overtaken with a snowstorm; yet this did not prevent her from returning with flowers. The snow with which her mantle and bonnet were covered, formed a rather striking contrast to the cowslips, etc., which were in her hand.

"The sea-shore is in some places peculiarly grand. The cliffs are stupendous; and in them birds of different kinds build their nests. A lofty rock in our neighbourhood is occupied by jackdaws. I suppose this is a somewhat singular circumstance. The beach in many places is covered with innumerable and beautiful small pebbles. On the shore we have also found some singular stones, having the weight and appearance of iron; but when broken, they exhibit the various hues of the rainbow, and give out a strong smell of sulphur.

"The island is fortified in several places. The fortification of Carisbrook Castle is celebrated in English history as the place where Charles I. was confined, and cruelly treated, when he fled from the Parliament. The room which he occupied, and the window from which he attempted to escape, are still pointed out. In the castle-yard there is a very deep well, from which water is raised for the use of the garrison, by means of a large wheel, worked by a donkey. One of these patient creatures died in 1771, after having performed this service for forty-five years.

"On several parts of the coast fish and oysters are caught in great abundance. One of those extraordinary incidents from which the greatest advantages arise, occurred in Brading Haven about the year 1782. A fishing vessel entering the harbour, as a matter of mere curiosity, let down her 'drag,' and, to the amazement and boundless delight of the fishermen, it was filled with the finest oysters. The sloop was stored in a few hours, and after disposing of the cargo to great advantage, the fishermen returned to the spot unperceived, and resumed their work with equal success. The treasure, however, could not long be hid, and since that time the

haven has been the resort of fishing smacks from various parts. How rich is the provision which our Heavenly Father has prepared for the supply of our wants! and how very grateful ought we to be for the continuance of His favours to us in particular!

“I am full of hope that my God, and your God, will yet raise me up, and will use me to be a guide and protector to you for coming years. The prospect is cheering; and I trust you do not forget to pray that it may be realized.”

In the beginning of May he was obliged to resort to change of air, and went to spend a short time with his old friends in Hull, from whence, under date of May 13th, 1837, he writes to Mrs. M'Owan:—

“THE welcome I have received from the friends has been most kind and gratifying. The reality of love is seen in it; and its exhilarating influence begins to be felt in my spirits and general health. The town is not much altered since we left. Wilberforce's Monument is a conspicuous object. I rejoice in its erection, because it perpetuates the memory of Christian principle and of genuine philanthropy; and is itself a monument of the enlightened zeal of the town and neighbourhood. There have been extensive almshouses built by the Trustees of Trinity House, which are really magnificent, and which will prove a lasting honour to the town, and a great blessing to many bereaved families. These, with a splendid proprietary school, are the principal improvements in the public buildings. The general aspect of the place is as clean, quiet, and peacefully domestic as when we lived in it; and, I am happy to say, the Society is in a good state. The congregations are good, and conversions are not unfrequent. I assisted in administering the Lord's Supper at Waltham Street chapel on Sunday evening, and was greatly delighted with the whole service. I have seen no such company of communicants since I left the circuit. I hope many in renewing their vows obtained

special refreshment to their souls. Accept, my dear J., my tender regards. I wish you were with me ; but as that cannot be at present, let us meet at the throne of grace, and strive to be useful to each other by invoking the blessing of our common Head. The Lord bless you and our dear children."

He also wrote the following letter to his parents, in which tenderness and fidelity are alike observable :—

"It affords me great pleasure to inform you that I have continued to improve in health since I last wrote. Besides engaging in various pastoral duties of late, I have preached twice without sustaining any injury, and I rejoice in the prospect of entering anew on my work, and hope to obtain help from on high to be more faithful and diligent than ever. I suppose it is common for persons in affliction to form resolutions ; I must now set myself in the strength of grace to reduce them to practice.

"I hope your health improves. If so, I need not say, 'Be grateful ;' for it is impossible for any one to be raised from a bed of affliction without feeling some emotions of that kind. I may therefore call on you to join me in a renewed dedication of ourselves to His service in whom we live, and move, and have our being. This is our reasonable service. Let it be done in the spirit of penitence, in the name of Christ, and without any secret reservation : then the merciful Lord will forgive our iniquities, and adopt us into His family. The whole of my experience during my affliction has contributed to confirm me in the choice I made whilst under your roof, when I first discovered my lost and undone condition by nature and practice. In health, when employed in scenes of activity and opportunities of pleasurable enjoyment, I found the bliss of loving, and of being loved, of God ; but it was reserved for the time when I was led to conclude that my labours were ended, and my life about to close, for me to prove the supreme importance of being built on the Rock of

Ages, and of having an infinite Saviour to look to. Like the virgins in the parable, I found I had no oil to spare ; but then I had that which gave me joy and confidence, in the prospect of the Bridegroom coming. I wish I could give you some idea of the peace I felt when my earthly prospects were darkest ; but that is impossible, for it was unspeakable. Let me entreat you, my dear parents, to secure it for yourselves. Leave nothing to be done on the bed of death. Already you feel yourselves more unfit for reading, meditation, and prolonged prayer, than you were years ago. This incapacity for these duties will increase ; do not therefore postpone the all-important business of salvation. The repentance which God demands for the sins of a long life is sufficient to break down the loftiest spirit ; the faith which unites to the Saviour, and which is imputed unto us for righteousness, is an exertion of mind which the most intelligent have found difficult, and which none can perform without divine assistance. This must be sought in prayer : and seeing it has been long slighted, what can be expected but that God will withhold it till it be sought carefully with tears ? I write these things not to raise a doubt whether you may obtain salvation, but to guard you against delay in securing its possession. It is purchased for you. It is offered to you. God commands us to receive it, and by every possible motive urges us to receive it *now*. To delay is to offend Him and rob ourselves. May He so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, is the earnest prayer of

“ Your affectionate son.”

The Conference soon drew on, and he began to feel concerned about his next appointment. But his gracious Master soon made light to shine upon his path. The Conference had kindly agreed that he should have a young man to assist him for one year ; and the stewards of the Colchester circuit having requested that he might be appointed as their Superintendent

the request was complied with,—an arrangement which met the utmost wishes of the invalid.

During his protracted illness, and while from home, he was favoured with the following letter of sympathy from the venerable Henry Moore, whose residence was near to his own. We give the letter entire.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“I AM sorry that your very kind letter should remain so long unacknowledged ; but though the feeling of sorrow is sincere, I can hardly, even now, force myself to the duty. My right hand has not only lost its cunning, but any attempt to write is accompanied with such mental fatigue, that I have given up the practice for some time, and generally employ some friend as my amanuensis who calls upon me. But this will do in present instance. I cannot refuse the request of your dear partner, so you must take my hobbling hand for want of a better. I am in truth ‘pleased to hear of your comfortable situation,’ and your prospect for the year is matter of special joy. I hope you will be entirely restored, and live to fight the good fight of faith for many years for your good Master. I was, I think, as weak as you are in my chest, in every way, before I had travelled three years, and expected nothing but a premature grave. And why was this ? Chiefly, because I would do all the work myself ; and was not satisfied with being the humble, and sometimes the disappointed, servant of the adorable one Master, who alone knows how to do it aright. This I learned chiefly from Mr. Wesley ; and consequently, through the goodness of the Lord, I am nearly his age. Glory be to God !

“I must conclude. My Christian love to your dear brother ; and with every good wish to yourself and the dear children,

“I remain

“Your obliged and affectionate brother,

“H. MOORE.

“My love to your colleagues.”

The following reminiscence of Mr. Moore is also worthy of record.

During my brother's residence in the City-Road circuit the late Mr. William Dawson, of Barnbow, near Leeds, called upon him one day, and asked if he could secure him an introduction to the Rev. Henry Moore. He gladly acceded to the request; but unfortunately Mr. Moore (then, be it remembered, however, in very feeble health, and nearing his ninetieth year) was not in one of his happiest moods that morning; and gave expression to his annoyance at the interruption, by saying to Mr. Dawson, as he entered the room, "I don't want to see you." Mr. Dawson, in his bland manner, replied, "The pain be yours, Mr. Moore; the pleasure is mine." This quite overcame the old gentleman. At once he grasped Mr. Dawson's hand in both of his, and exclaimed, "O, Mr. Dawson, you are the king of Billies, the king of Billies!" And after a pleasant conversation, they parted as excellent friends.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

COLCHESTER.

ARRIVING in his new circuit, he wrote to me on September 15th, 1837, in follows:—

“OUR parting with our London friends was affectionate, instructive, and to me, at least, depressing. Our journey here was safe and pleasant. I preached twice on the first Sabbath, and once on the one ensuing, with much pleasure to myself, and without any injury to my health. By the following Saturday evening I was gladdened by the arrival of my two colleagues. I find them good men and true, and they seem intent on making me happy. They are respectable preachers; and being both in full connexion, I am relieved from the necessity of visiting the country Societies, except as the weather and my health permit. This is a good thing, and I praise God for it.

“The people are in a fine spirit, and testify their esteem and sympathy in every possible way. Their desires and determinations respecting my labours are strictly conservative. They have told me that they did not calculate on more than one sermon on the Sabbath from me. They keep a horse and gig for our use; and I have had such offers of help from several of the friends, when the circuit horse is out with one of my colleagues, as satisfy me that I need not walk a mile, except as inclination leads me. May the good Lord, whose I am, give His blessing with the repose which is thus mercifully and wonderfully provided for me

“Our town chapel is well attended on Sunday; and, except in Hull, I have never seen better week-night congregations. Last Monday forenoon three persons called on me with the jailer’s inquiry on their lips. I have also begun a class of children on Saturday afternoon, which promises to do well.”

September 18th.—To his eldest daughter at school, he writes the following questions, to assist in self-examination:—

‘IS IT WELL WITH THEE?’ (2 Kings iv. 26.)

“MY DEAR CHILD,

“THESE questions are proposed, not in the expectation that you will be able to give to each of them a ready answer in the affirmative; but they are intended to furnish a standard for your soul in its progress towards God and heaven; and though at first it may show you many deficiencies, I hope you will pray and labour on, till you realize the mark for the prize of your high calling.

“Do you resolutely and constantly choose those things, ways, books, companions, and exercises, which God commends, and which exert a hallowing influence upon the soul? Do you choose them because you love them, because God commends them, and because of their sanctifying tendency?

“On the other hand, do you reject those things, do you shun those ways, do you avoid those companions, and do you loathe those amusements and practices which God has either directly or indirectly forbidden? And do you do this deliberately, not regarding what others will say, or what consequences may follow?

“Do you constantly, and as if by instinct, discern the vanity of all created enjoyments, the infinite worth of the soul, the all-sufficiency of God, the preciousness of Christ, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the exquisite beauty of holiness?

“Do you discover in God all that is great and good,

amiable and truly desirable? Can you sincerely delight in His holiness, justice, and power, taken in connection with His mercy and goodness, as seen in the face of Jesus?

“Is there an aptness in your mind to receive the light which issues from the page of inspiration and the teachings of the Spirit? Do you love the truth, though it wounds you, though it condemns you, though it shows your self-love and self-seeking, your poverty, weakness, and worthlessness in a moral and religious point of view?

“Do you vehemently desire to know the whole truth respecting God, Christ, yourself, and true religion, as revealed in the Scriptures? Do you dig for truth as for hid treasures? Do you reduce it to practice, and otherwise improve it as it is revealed to your mind?

“Does your conscience refer to the Word of God as the rule of duty on all occasions? Does it reprove for the least omission of duty, or the most minute violations of law? Does it shrink from the very appearance of evil, and refuse to rest while the least vestige of guilt remains unpurged? Does it not only take account of actions, but also of thoughts, words, and motives? Does it refuse to be bribed by outward appearances when the heart is disordered or unholy? And does it object to be put off with fair promises of future amendment when present obedience is withheld, when talents are buried, and opportunities of doing or of getting good are suffered to pass unimproved?

“Which do you remember with the greatest ease,—the mercies with which God crowns you, or the chastisements with which He afflicts you? the substance of a sermon, or the topics introduced in a trifling conversation? the injuries which others do to you, or the benefits with which they bless you? It is a good sign if it be easy to remember the good, but difficult and unnatural to remember the evil; if the things which belong to your peace are bright in your remembrance, while the shortcomings of your companions, the trifles

of the day, and the frivolities of fashion, are easily forgotten.

“Is God the supreme object of your love, and do you habitually delight in Him as your all-sufficient portion? Do you hate nothing but what God hates, and every thing which He hates? Do you desire to be holy rather than to be rich or great? Do all your hopes of heaven centre in, and rest upon, the Lord Jesus?”

“Does the work of regeneration wrought in you by the Holy Spirit evidence the genuineness of the witness which He bears to your adoption? Do you indulge no tempers or desires but what are consistent with loyalty to the government of Christ, and the most perfect resignation to His will?”

“Are your joys holy joys, and your sorrows godly sorrows? Is it your constant study and endeavour to have heaven in your eye, Christ in your heart, and the world under your feet?”

“The Lord bless you! Make much of Christ. Live to purpose. Keep broad awake.”

The three letters that follow were addressed to me.

“COLCHESTER, *February 21st*, 1838.

“If I have put your patience and brotherly affection to the test by my long delay, I am happy to state that there is no necessity my letter should now be filled with evil tidings. The work of the Lord never appeared to me more honourable or more pleasant than it has done of late. To preach is indeed a privilege, and the visitation of the sick is a delight.

“I have often thought of late on the words of the apostle: ‘As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith;’ and I have been endeavouring to obey. Unable to fight in the valley, I have given myself to prayer in the mountain; and being restrained from doing full duty in the vineyard, I have occupied myself in devising means whereby others may work. Besides our Tract Society, mentioned in my last, we have

succeeded in forming a rather extensive plan of holding cottage prayer-meetings, which, I am happy to say, works well." (He then refers to a Ladies' Dorcas Society, the opening of a Sunday-school Library, and the reviving of a Society Library.)

April 10th, 1838.—"You will wonder how I have been so long in writing to you, especially as such a monitory event as the death of our dear parent formed a chief topic of your last. I had heard, as you supposed, from the family, at the same time as yourself; and, though much affected with the new breach in the domestic circle, was not greatly surprised. It was indeed matter of regret that nothing was said about the state of her mind. But such subjects, you know, are strange in Crieff; and the general proneness to attribute any thing like assurance to the account of presumption induces the dying to keep their consolations to themselves, and makes the living cautious in repeating their sayings. I believe our mother was a better Christian than many thought. She knew the way of faith; and she was no Calvinist. No one in the family read our letters and the Magazines with so much eagerness as she did. Father will not be long behind her. May he, with us and ours, be prepared for the great change!

"My capability for work improves. Last Sunday I walked five miles, preached twice, held a lovefeast, and administered the Lord's Supper. This was rather too much; but I feel nothing worse. Our Societies are all in peace, and some of them in prosperity."

May 25th, 1838.—"It is impossible for me to state how much we were astounded by the melancholy news of your last. The 'Watchman' and your letter came by the same post; and before I had time to read the first line of yours, Mr. Monkhouse" (his colleague), "found out the mournful fact in the paper. Truly it may be said, 'In the midst of life we are in death.' We sympathize with you, and yet we hardly know what to say to you. The stroke is so heavy, and so unanticipated, that we rejoice and give thanks you have not utterly fainted under it. This you must have done, but for

the Divine support you have obtained, and the abounding evidence you have had that your loss is your dear Mary's eternal gain.* Our children are greatly impressed with the event. They seem to feel as if death had come nearer to them in this instance than at any former time. May our gracious Lord make it the means of spiritual life both to yours and ours ! Her calm composure and holy triumph furnish instruction and encouragement to us all. I feel as if the goodness of God to her while passing through the valley and shadow of death constitutes a new motive to love and serve Him more perfectly and ardently than I have ever done. When all are amiable, it may appear invidious to prefer ; but both with Jane and myself Mary was a favourite. We have often remarked how tender and affectionate she was to grandmother in her helpless condition, and how motherly she used to talk to the younger children. In the course of my visits to your family, her ear especially was always attentive to serious discourse, and though she said but little it was very apparent that she relished the theme, and was sorry to have it interrupted. Her removal makes, indeed, a great breach in your domestic circle ; but in the triumphant character of her death, God has put a high honour upon you and the family generally. It was truly a Royal visit. God has taken her, not so much to bereave you, as that she might be glorified, and you more fully sanctified. *He* has done it, and done it in love, I doubt not. I need not say that He expects to hear your voice at the throne of grace, and to have to supply all your wants in this time of special need. We will not forget you when we draw nigh to our common Lord. Give our united and tenderest love to Christiana and all the dear children. I rejoice that, in the midst of domestic sorrow, you had so much of the divine presence at your missionary services. Praying that as your day your strength may be,

“I remain,” etc.

* She was my second daughter, and was taken away suddenly by fever, in her seventeenth year.

The subject of my Mary's happy death is resumed in the following letter to his eldest daughter at school.

“*June, 1838.*

“MY DEAR C.,

“THOUGH I cannot plead a full excuse for not writing sooner, I may say that since my return from sweet Meriden I have been unusually occupied with circuit engagements. Let me beg you to do your duty, however others may forget or neglect theirs. Imitate what is good and praiseworthy in all, but avoid foibles and faults in whomsoever they are found. Be resolved to excel, and that not only in great but in small matters. Habituate yourself to make just observations on persons and things, and study to turn every such observation to personal profit. By this means you will transform the wise, the pious, the diligent, and the dutiful into mirrors, in which you shall behold a living picture of what you, as the daughter of a minister, and as the oldest of our family, ought to be; and even in the character and conduct of the irresolute, the negligent, and undevout, you will discover things to be avoided, and consequences to be deprecated.

“Keep up your plan of early rising. Be sure you do this. You will find your reward in good health, good spirits, and a good conscience. On no account neglect the reading of the Scriptures, and your customary times for secret prayer. Recollect that the all-seeing eye of God is over you, and that it is your privilege to have uninterrupted fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Let your seriousness be tempered with cheerfulness, but never lay aside your self-command, never be a trifler; and remember that to reach perfection in any exercise, pursuit, or study, whether secular or sacred, we must ‘give all diligence.’

“It is my painful duty to inform you that God has been calling upon us, by death in the circle of our relations, to prepare to meet Him. My dear mother, resident in Crieff, has been called, full of years, and, I

trust, fully ready to change worlds. And your dear cousin Mary has also been summoned from time into eternity. Her piety was decided for some years. She was brought to God while the family were resident in Hull, and experienced a deeper work of grace since they went to Northampton. Her death was very triumphant. It was brought on by cold, which increased, and terminated in fever, which soon proved fatal. For sometime before her death she spoke of dying with the utmost composure. In the morning of the day on which she died, and when she felt that the hand of death was on her, she rejoiced with 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.' She affectionately requested her mother to give her up, and said, 'Do not speak of my sufferings, they only waft my spirit to the throne. I could willingly bear much more to please my Saviour. Speak of Him. Praise Him.' To her father, who had been absent a short time on Society matters, as he entered the room, she remarked, 'Father, I am going. It will soon be over now. Glory be to God!' To her brothers and sisters, she gave a solemn charge, and divided among them her books and other little things. Perceiving the family much affected, she said, 'Do not cry, I am going to heaven.' Her mother remarked, 'You will soon be there, and see your grandfather. He will welcome you to glory.' She replied, 'Yes, and your three little babes: you will soon have four children in heaven.' Her father said, 'There you will meet with all the worthies of the Christian Church.' She answered, 'I have thought on these things, and there, above all, I shall see Jesus in the brightness of His glory. O, what a mercy that He should regard such a worm as I am! O what a mercy!' Soon after, she raised her arm and waved her hand, with what little strength remained, and almost shouted, 'Victory! Victory! Hallelujah!' She spoke no more, but soon quietly fell asleep in Jesus.

"Give our most affectionate regards to Mr. and Mrs. Allbut, and to your governesses, the Misses Allbut. I need not say how much I wish you to study to make them

happy. They love you, are kind to you, and are prepared to do every thing in their power to make you happy. Now prove that you are worthy of such friends. I greatly rejoice that Providence has placed you under their roof. Go on, my dear girl, in all good things. God bless and keep you by night and by day."

To the late Mr. C. Dove, of Leeds.

"COLCHESTER, 1838.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I OUGHT to have replied to your kind communications long ago, but delayed from week to week, in hope of being able to report that I had executed the commission you had so kindly intrusted to me respecting the Memoir of your dear Margaret.* But through a succession of engagements and engrossing incidents, joined with the infirm state of my health, I have not yet fulfilled your wishes or my own purposes in that matter. Within the last six months we have suffered a series of the most distressing bereavements in this circuit which I have ever known. The mortality in the town has been unusually great, and the principal disease has been the small-pox. For three months we have been obliged to suspend the operations of our Tract Society, and of our Sunday-school Libraries. Up to the present time disease and death abound. These events have had a most depressing effect upon my spirits, and the more so because I perceive but little disposition in the people to learn righteousness or to turn to Him who smites. Hitherto our family has been mercifully preserved, for which we are unfeignedly thankful. In all the deaths which have taken place in our Society, there has been the triumph of faith, and in three of the cases the victory was glorious.

"I have been led to make these remarks, that you

* This Memoir, with that of her sister, who died shortly afterwards, was published at the Methodist Book-Room, under the title of "The Two Doves."

may perceive how I have been engaged ; but you and your dear family have not been forgotten. I esteem you too highly, and love you too tenderly, ever to forget you long together.

“I am afflicted to think of the successive strokes which you and your dear wife are called to bear. They are certainly both monitory and disciplinary, and in both respects they have been sanctified to you and yours. You have wept as if you wept not. You have rejoiced, as though you rejoiced not ; and you have used this world as not abusing it, knowing that the fashion of this world passeth away. In the unerring judgment of God the Holy Ghost, these are the legitimate fruits of sanctified affliction.

“Never having lost a dear child by death myself, I know that I cannot enter into the chill, the silence, and the desolation consequent upon what are called ‘ premature bereavements ;’ but you will agree with me in thinking that in your losses there have been many mitigations, which you have no doubt gratefully observed and duly appreciated. God has stayed His rough wind in the day of His east wind. Above all, concerning each of the dear deceased you have the fullest assurance that they died in the Lord, and are now before the throne.

“We have to remember, my dear friend, that God is training us for eternity, and for *all eternity* ; and one reason why He seems to crowd difficult lessons and disciplinary acts into a short space of time is, that the final result may be somewhat answerable to the munificence of His love, and the vastness of our heaven-created desires. We do not more frequently forecast how it will be with us and ours six months hence, than He desires that it may be *well* with us and them *for ever*. His language to us in these dark dispensations is, ‘ What I do thou knowest not now ; but thou shalt know hereafter.’ ‘ At even time it shall be light.’ I have scarcely adverted to the affliction of dear Anna, lest it would be inappropriate ; but I wish to know how she is, and how you all are.”

To the late Miss Margaret Cole, of Thorp, near Colchester, who died of consumption, he wrote :—

“ *February 20th, 1838.*

“ MY DEAR MISS COLE,

“ I HAVE been deeply affected to hear of your heavy and protracted affliction, and would have rejoiced to have ministered in person to your spiritual comfort, had not circumstances hindered.

“ It affords me, however, great pleasure to know that your soul is happy in the enjoyment of your Saviour's love. This was indeed to have been expected. You chose the Most High for your portion in health, and now, in accordance with His nature and promises, He proves Himself to be your ‘ all in all,’ ‘ a very present help in time of need.’

“ It is at all times, but especially in seasons of affliction, a source of consolation to know that our covenant God reigns, and that ‘ He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.’ His will is the standard of right and the rule of order to the universe. Among men it is the origin of all that is good in principle, holy in action, or satisfying in enjoyment; and its ultimate design is the manifestation of His own glory, and the perpetual blessedness of His people. Nothing which contradicts His will can be either good or profitable to us; and we become holy, happy, or useful, just in proportion as we comply with its requirements, and acquiesce in its arrangements.

“ Kind friends, earthly possessions, health, and lengthened life, are choice favours from His hand; and we are permitted to rejoice in them while His sovereign will makes them ours. But, separate from Him, they cannot make us happy, neither can the want of them make us miserable. While we account God our glory, and inherit the tokens of His favour, though poor, we are rich; though weak, we are strong; and though sick and solitary as to earthly companions, we are neither comfortless nor alone. For, independently of the angelic

guard which He stations around our bed, His own eyes of love beam on us, His everlasting arms are underneath us, and His paternal ear is open to our softest sigh, and to our most secret prayer.

“Not only believe that Jehovah is near, and that He is a fountain of life, my dear young friend, but cleave to Him as *your* life; abide in Him as your refuge, and day and night glory in Him as your Saviour. He is better than life: therefore we will prefer Him to our chiefest joy, we will bow to His sceptre, kiss His rod, rely on His faithful word, and while He lends us breath utter His praise, in hope of beholding His face in righteousness.

“To us who love God, and who are the called according to His purpose, nothing comes by chance,—all things work together for good. It is our privilege to be alike prepared to traverse the desert, or to go in at once and possess the good land; to work in the vineyard, fight with the foe, or to yield up our spirit into His hands, and enter into His joy. ‘*God is love*; and He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.’ May my afflicted sister prove every moment the blessedness contained in these words. This God, who is love, reigns: with Him ‘are the issues of life and of death.’ Your disease is subject to His authority. He can remove it, and if it be best for you and most for His glory, He will. But should He not—should He permit it to waste and throw down the earthly tabernacle—He will thus make it the means of translating your soul to glory. Leave it, leave it all to Him. He cannot err; neither can He lie. To you, in Christ, He has said, ‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.’ ‘He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.’ O let us then abide in His will! nothing doubting, nothing wavering, but continually trusting that He will qualify for suffering, sustain in trouble, and make us more than conqueror over all our enemies, even over our final foe.

“And while we remain on earth, let us meditate on heaven,—converse about its joys, dwell near its gates, and live in expectation of its glory, which will ere long burst upon our enraptured sight. Let us in life and in death extol the Father’s love, magnify the merits of His Son, and ascribe all the inward holiness we feel, and all the patience and resignation with which we are armed, to the almighty grace of the Holy Spirit.

“With sympathizing regards to you, to your dear parents, and the other members of the family,” etc.

He attended the Conference at Bristol in 1838, from whence he writes to Mrs. M’Owan the three letters that follow.

“BRISTOL, *July 18th*, 1838.

“HAVING reached the end of my journey in safety, and enjoyed a good night’s rest, I engage in the pleasant task of giving you an account of my journey. The weather was fine, and as the road to Bristol was new to me, I enjoyed the scenery greatly. As we approached Bath, it was charming. The city reminded me much of Edinburgh, only the hills around were not so lofty, neither were the general features of the scenery so bold, as are those which environ the ‘City of Palaces’ in the north. But I must confess that what was wanting in boldness was made up in softness and rural beauty. My reading was chiefly in the New Testament, and in Colton’s ‘Reasons for Episcopacy.’ One of our fellow passengers was a young lady who was returning to her relatives in Bath—most probably, to die. Five of her brothers and sisters had died of consumption; and she, having broken a blood-vessel through over fatigue, connected with the coronation of our beloved sovereign, is, to all appearance, fast following. Her case affected me much, and it afforded me great pleasure to render her some little assistance in her state of feebleness. I spoke a little to her about her soul, but had to regret that there was but little opportunity for such remarks, and a want of promptitude on my part in improving those which occurred.

The sight of her heightened my gratitude to my Divine Healer, and strongly suggested to me the necessity of caution. I rode outside from Bath to Bristol, and the effect of the setting sun upon the winding river, the green meadows, the corn-fields, the gently-sloping hills, adorned as they are with fine ancient trees, was most enrapturing. What gave a charm to the whole was the reflection, that the God who made them all was mine in Christ Jesus. The tear of gratitude accompanied the swell of adoration, while I connected nature with grace, and earth with heaven. On one part of the road we passed a number of deer; some of them were feeding with their fawns, quite free from fear, only a few yards from the highway. Here and there, I saw groups of happy children playing in the fields, and otherwise enjoying themselves. I thought of you and my children, and breathed a prayer for a blessing on you all. I have been laying plans and making resolutions respecting the keeping of my heart, and the maintenance of the life of God in the soul. Let me entreat you not to forget this in your prayers for yourself and me."

" July 23rd.

" YESTERDAY I heard three excellent sermons from Messrs. Reece, Atherton, and John Scott. The congregations were good, and the ministers were divinely assisted in setting forth the meaning of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, and the glorious fulness of the great salvation. To me it was a feast-day, though, if I had followed my own secret inclination, I should have preferred doing a little work myself. But having pledged myself to you to keep silence, and there being no lack of labourers, I refrained.

" The ancient city of Bristol is crowded, and not very clean, but its vicinity on all sides is delightful. In five minutes I can gain an elevation of at least three hundred feet above the level of the town, from which there is a most enchanting prospect. For nearly two miles round the country is studded with beautiful villas and terraces, which are seen everywhere peeping

out from between the foliage of lofty trees and luxuriant shrubberies. Clifton, especially, is a most romantic and beautiful spot. I have seen nothing like it since I left the west of Scotland. The houses are spacious, and are built in a style of great elegance. The glen, to speak in Scottish phrase, through which the river runs, winds in a serpentine form, so that almost every fifty yards you advance a new and enlarging prospect presents itself. The rocks on either side are composed of limestone, and are enriched with many antediluvian remains. Except where the hand of man has laid them bare, they are covered with wild and varied verdure to the top. The suspension-bridge, which is now in course of erection, will be, when completed, one of the wonders of the world. The span extends about five hundred and twenty feet, at an elevation above the river of two hundred and ten feet. The passing and repassing of steam-boats and sailing vessels below adds greatly to the interest of the scene. The gardens, not excepting those connected with the cottages of the poor in this neighbourhood, abound with beautiful flowers. The taste for these beauteous, but short-lived, visitors is ardent and refined."

"August 3rd, 1838.

"THE signs of our gracious Master's presence amongst us become increasingly manifest. The ordination services have been signally impressive. The Conference partook of the Lord's Supper last night. It was a time to be remembered to the end of one's life. My mind was at first distracted and fatigued, but by looking upward to Him who gives the weary rest, I was soon favoured with a delightful calm, during which I was enabled to intercede for you and our dear children with much freedom and confidence. Peace be with you, and, till we meet, farewell. Give my love to the children."

On his return home he wrote to his eldest daughter on the subject of religious declension:—

“COLCHESTER, *October 10th, 1838.*

“WE did indeed long to hear from you before your last letter arrived. With your diligent application to your studies we were much pleased; but we were very sorry to learn that you had grown remiss in your love to your dear Redeemer, and that you had constrained Him to withdraw the sweet assurance of His love. You cannot imagine the satisfaction we felt in knowing, from time to time, that you maintained your walk with God, and made the engagements and enjoyments of time subservient to the best interests of your never-dying soul. This is now somewhat marred; but we trust that in your next you will be able to announce that you have recovered your peace and power. One of the stratagems of the enemy will be to persuade you that God will cast you off for ever, or that you must, as a matter of necessity, go mourning many days. Now you must reject both these suggestions; and while you confess your ingratitude and folly with the utmost simplicity and fulness, you must remember that God is love; that He loved you before you had any love for Him; that He received you at first as a penitent believer in His Son; and that all His subsequent tokens of love were bestowed on you for His Son's sake. Now, the precious Jesus is ‘the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.’ If you come anew in His name, and trusting in His merits, God will again, and that without any delay, say unto your soul, ‘I am thy salvation.’ Remember, though you have grieved Him, God is your *Father still*. Had you displeased me by doing wrong, I might have reproved you; and if the fault had been very great, I might have shut you out of my presence, and withheld from you a parent's kiss for several days; but you cannot imagine I would refuse you bread to eat; that I would turn you out of doors, forbid you to *call yourself my child, or me your father*. No! you cannot suppose such an utter disowning of you on my part possible. And yet my utmost love is but a drop derived from Him, the unbounded Ocean of Love, of whom you are apt to

fear that He will cast you off for ever. No! my child. He loves you a thousand times more than I do. *He waits* to be gracious. He wonders you have been so long in giving Him credit for willingness and readiness to receive you graciously, and to love you freely. Earthly parents are 'evil,' and yet they 'know how to give good gifts unto their children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?' His Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to you, His humbled, penitent child, whom He has redeemed by the precious blood of His only-begotten Son. Read Luke xi. 1-13, and Hosea xiv. Place your wounded, grieved spirit at His footstool; plead His kind invitations, and His exceeding great and precious promises. Remember the Redeemer's design in coming into the world; His tears over Jerusalem; His agony and bloody sweat; His grief and passion on the tree; for they are all on your side, and furnish encouragement to your faith. The sorrow, the self-loathing, and the utter helplessness, of which you are the subject, are hopeful symptoms, harbingers of deliverance, signs of life, and proofs that this is the day of His power with you.

'The Lord will to His temple come;
Prepare your heart to make Him room.'

"He comes to give 'beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.' Read Jer. xxxi. 18-20. Trust the faithful word. He cannot lie. Repose on the rock of your Redeemer's merit, and feeling that He weeps and loves you still, say:—

'Now rest my long-divided heart;
Fix'd on this blissful centre, rest:
Nor ever from thy Lord depart,
With Him of every good possest.'

"Remember us most affectionately to Mr. and Mrs. Allbut, together with the ladies your governesses."

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

MANCHESTER, GROSVENOR STREET.

AFTER the Conference of 1839, he removed to the Third Manchester Circuit, Grosvenor Street, with his friend the Rev. Joseph Taylor as Superintendent. He had laboured in this circuit before, and was kindly received by his old friends. His health being now restored, he was able to take his full share of circuit-work ; but he found it difficult to resist the calls made upon him for occasional services in other circuits. He had not been long here when he felt it his duty to write a letter of sympathy to a lady in Colchester, whose daughter had lately died, soon after the death of a sister. The following is an extract :—

“I REGRET exceedingly that I should have failed to send you some words of consolation, which you had a right to expect under your late heavy bereavement. But the truth is, that through being previously depressed with great nervous debility, I was so overcome with the account of your loss, as given by dear Mr. C——, that I felt quite unable for the task of writing on such an occasion. We read the letter with tears, and then kneeling down we prayed to our Heavenly Father that He would sustain and comfort you all under your fiery trial. Your loss is heavy, and the breach made in your family circle cannot be repaired ; but in the support already afforded you have striking proof that your covenant God is a very present help in trouble ; and you have the felicity of reflecting, that as your

loved ones diminish in number on earth they increase in heaven. Had Queen Victoria sent her state carriage and principal attendants for your dear N——, with an assurance that she should sit at the royal table, and share the royal favour, even the nobles of the land would have envied you. But a greater honour than this has been bestowed upon you, and a higher felicity has fallen to her lot. The King of kings and the Lord of lords has called her to His palace in the skies,—has made her equal to the angels, and has said for your comfort, she shall ‘go out no more for ever.’ The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed her, and shall lead her to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from her eyes. She does not even *weep for you*; but acquiescing in the Providence that spares you and her dear father to train those that are left for God and heaven, she rejoices in hope of meeting you and them before the everlasting throne.”

On receipt of the notice of the death of my eldest daughter in her twentieth year, at Cheltenham, on November 24th, he wrote:—

“MANCHESTER, *November 26th, 1839.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“THOUGH your former favour expressed strong fears respecting your dear Christiana, yet recollecting her blooming and healthy appearance when we last saw her, we indulged a lively hope that prayer would be heard, and that your Heavenly Father would spare you this accumulated grief.” (He refers to the death of my second daughter at Northampton, already noticed.) “To you the loss is great, but to her the gain is unspeakable. Whilst you weep over the lifeless body, her glorified spirit rejoices in the presence of her Saviour. You know she is not lost, but gone before to that haven of repose whither we are voyaging, and which we long to reach. All tears are for ever wiped from her eyes. She mingles with the spirits of the illustrious dead,

and has been greeted by our Immanuel, in the enjoyment of whose smiles, and in the sight of whose glory, she finds fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

“We have prayed and wept over your letter, and we feel assured that you and your dear wife will be supported under the bereavement, and enabled to glorify God in the fires. ‘My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness,’ is a promise which suits all times, and reaches to all, even the most distressing circumstances. Our deep sense of insufficiency and of weakness marks us out as the persons referred to, and constitutes our qualification for having the promise fulfilled in our experience. Expect, my dear brother, not only to be preserved from fainting, but to be filled with peace and joy in believing. The soul of your child is escaped to bliss, and over that event Jesus rejoices, angels rejoice, she herself rejoices; and it is in no way inconsistent that while you weep you also should rejoice. The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble. The name of the God of Jacob defend thee, and send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion!”

To his only son, at school.

“MANCHESTER, *February 24th*, 1840.

“MY DEAR P.,

“I AM SORRY that we should continue to try your patience by our delays in writing. You may, however, rest assured that, though we do not commission the postman to knock at your door as often as you would like, yet you are by no means forgotten. We mention your name in our prayers, and we talk about you when we sit down at our family table.

“We have been very glad to perceive that you are still happy at school. We wish you to be happy, but not heedless. Remember that the golden sands of time are ceaselessly running out. Each day, with its multiplied opportunities of doing and of getting good, comes but once; and for every hour and opportunity thus

afforded, we must give a strict account. You can be *young but once*. The present season is your seed-time; and just in proportion as you improve it, will be your position of honour and happiness in future life. If the farmer were to leave his spring work to be done during the summer months, he might thereby escape some bitter blasts, and enjoy many a merry hour with loiterers like himself; but the penalty would be, green crops in autumn, an empty barn in winter, with want, shame, and sorrow throughout the rest of the year. 'The hand of the diligent maketh rich;' but idleness and inconsideration entail ignorance, poverty, and infamy, on all who yield to their influence. Up, then, my boy, and be doing. If there are idlers in your school, use them as beacons, not examples. 'Play when you play, and work when you work;' or, as it is put in the Bible, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' Be not satisfied that you escape censure, but endeavour to deserve commendation. Study to excel in every exercise. So shall you become a praise to your teacher and an example to your schoolfellows. As each passing day bespeaks the shortening of your time for improvement, let it demonstrate also that you have turned its hours to profit, and are better prepared for the discharge of duty at its close than you were at its dawn. In all your work remember that that which is well done is twice done, because it does not need to be repeated. And when once the habit of doing things well is fully formed, a great saving of time is the sure result.

"Above all, I hope you will ever keep in mind that true religion is the principal thing. Do not, my dear boy, live without a real conversion of soul to God. You are redeemed by the blood of His Son; and it is His desire that you should, from your early youth, live in the enjoyment of the blessings of the Gospel salvation. These are offered to you without money or price, and we displease God by refusing the acceptance of them on these easy terms. Believe that the blessed Jesus loved you, and gave Himself for you; and, in the

spirit of loving gratitude, see that you love Him, and give yourself to Him."

To his daughter Mary, at school.

"MANCHESTER, March 12th, 1840.

"MY DEAR MARY,

"IF my replies to your letters have hitherto been tardy, I hope to mend; and shall always account that time well spent which is devoted to correspondence with my dear Mary.

"We hope you continue in good health, and that, happy yourself, you are studying to make all around you happy too. If you steadfastly believe that the Lord Jesus loved you, and gave Himself for you to redeem you from the guilt and power of sin, you will possess a never-failing spring of happiness in yourself which no alien power can stop or dry up. That He came to save *you* is evident from the fact that He came to save *sinners*. Believe that He died for *you*; that He waits to receive *you*, and that He will in no wise cast you out;—and, in the exercise of this faith, come to Him without delay. We are said to believe a man when we trust to his word;—now, the Scripture is the Word of God, and in it He declares, He '*so loved the world*, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;' and further, that Jesus is '*the Propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*' This is enough. Here is firm footing. The Father loved *me*. He gave His Son for *me*. He willeth not that I should perish, but should have everlasting life. Jesus is the Propitiation—the Propitiation for *my* sins;—yes, for the sins of the whole world. All this is in the Bible. God has said it. He cannot lie. He is in His Word; and believing it, I believe Him, and believing in Him, I am saved. The truth which I believe, declares the world to be redeemed, and that the Son of God is the Redeemer. He gave Himself a Ransom for all, and

consequently for *me*. I credit the fact. 'Tis wonderful, yet true. 'He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.' To doubt this is to make God a liar. I shudder at the thought, and therefore cry, 'Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!' 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people.' Jesus died for me! O wondrous love! O boundless grace! I render Thee my heart, my life, my all, in return for Thy dying love, O blessed Jesus! Thine may I live! Thine may I die!

"This, my dear Mary, is believing in the Lord Jesus with the heart unto righteousness. Make the exercise your own, and the benefit of a full, free, and present pardon will be yours. I long to hear that you are a partaker of like precious faith with the happy little family circle at home.

"Guard against hurry in your private devotions, both evening and morning. Rise early, and choose rather to have ten minutes to spare than to have one minute too little for interceding with God.

'Let love through all your actions run,
And all your words be mild.'

Be scrupulous in speaking the truth, and act on principles of strict Christian honour in all things. Remember, you have to sustain my name and credit. Let me have comfort in you and credit from you. Be resolved to excel in every branch of learning. If your teachers see that you are intent on improvement, and that you do not regard your lessons as a task, they will delight to help you in your studies."

"MANCHESTER, *July 3rd*, 1840.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"We have read the memoir of your beloved Mary with tears. It is very valuable, and must be useful. Our Mary, I am sorry to say, has come home from school in an invalid state. She is, indeed, somewhat

better since her return, but we have no hope that she will be able to resume her studies during the ensuing half year. Her mind, I am happy to say, is in a delightful frame; and, were the weather to become fine, we hope her health would improve.

“Trade is here in a deplorable state; but the people show no disposition to turn to Him who smites them. Sabbath desecration, by means of railroads, is awfully on the increase. I have lifted up my voice against the iniquity in three sermons which I have preached in two of our town chapels. Some have been offended, and many have expressed their gratitude for the information communicated, and for the fidelity exercised. The sin of furnishing facilities to Sabbath-breakers in taking their sinful pleasures used formerly to rest with innkeepers and coach-proprietors,—men who, for the most part, made no profession of religion. But now the evil infects the *élite* of the commercial world, and is spreading extensively among members of the Christian church, which, in my apprehension, aggravates the evil tenfold.”

On his way to the Newcastle Conference, he writes as follows to Mrs. M'Owan, dating from—

“LIVERPOOL, *July 21st*, 1840.

“My journey hither had nothing of incident in it worth relating. I had on one side of me a young couple, who, though they had probably passed through the ‘honeymoon,’ seemed fond and happy in each other. To me the signs of sincere and ardent affection are always pleasing. ‘Love is of God,’ and I delight to trace its natural and unsophisticated manifestations, whether in the form of high personal preference, minute and condescending kindness, glowing gratitude, or unsuspecting confidence. The signs of genuine affection in man or woman, old or young, in bird or beast, are grateful to my mind and pleasing in my eyes. One of the greatest defects in my own

nature and piety is littleness of love ; and the blessing which, above all others, I have been seeking since I parted with you is 'perfect love.' To my deficiency in this great constituent of true religion, I have traced nearly all my shortcomings during the expiring year of my ministerial life. These defects have been many and great ; and I can only hope to amend in my future life, by having the love of God more abundantly shed abroad in my heart. To obtain this, I must be more faithful in redeeming time, in reading the Scriptures, in cultivating talents, in improving opportunities of usefulness, and in subordinating all minor motives to a supreme regard for the glory of God. On these points, I hope I can say, I have fully resolved ; and 'He is faithful who hath promised' all needful aid. The circumstances of our little family have occupied much of my thoughts since I left home, and a desire to promote their well-being in time and eternity has operated as a powerful *stimulus* in inducing me to determine on a higher style of piety. Their ages, their diversified tempers, and the state of their souls, are calculated to fill us with prayerful solicitude. Never before did we need so much of knowledge, prudence, piety, and the prayer of faith. Their habits are insensibly fixing, their characters are forming, and according to the bent they now take, such will be their future portion and destiny. A thousand desirable objects are secured, if they truly give themselves to God ; and hitherto their inclination this way is such as to afford us comfort.

"Mr. C. has told us of a rich man, a director of one of the banks here, who, with some of his co-directors, sat till half-past eleven o'clock on Saturday night drinking wine. On leaving his jovial companions he hired a cab to take him to his residence, about three miles in the country. The cabman says he put him down at a little distance from his own house. His family were alarmed by his not reaching home that night ; and they had their fears but too fully realized on Sunday evening, by finding him *dead in a*

pit! Whether he was murdered, or whether he had wandered off the road, is not known. But, O! what a death! His sole business was to heap up riches: his manners were rough and repulsive; he was unamiable, and was rather feared than loved. He owed his importance and influence in society mainly to his property. Now, what beggar would exchange with him? What a bubble is worldly greatness? May the event be sanctified to all who are likeminded. Give my love to the children. I hope they will fulfil my joy in loving God, obeying you, and being kind to each other."

To the same.

"NEWCASTLE CONFERENCE, *July 25th*, 1840.

"I LEFT Liverpool under a deep sense of the kindness of my friends, the goodness of my God, and the treachery of my heart. I have often found it difficult to unite recreation, devotion, and usefulness together; and on this occasion I felt conscious that I had not kept the main object steadily in view, and had suffered some fair opportunities to pass unimproved. Surely, there is no necessity that the sight of Jehovah's works, and the enjoyment of His temporal mercies, should diminish His love in our hearts, or make us forgetful of His glory as our chief end. A deeper piety, and greater simplicity of intention and character, would cure this proneness to wander 'from the central point of bliss.' The recollection of failure in Liverpool made me approach Newcastle with much self-distrust and prayer for more grace.

"Mr. C—— was my fellow-passenger, and he tried to make the journey interesting. Each natural beauty was pointed out, and many historical recollections were brought in to illustrate hill and dale, and 'castle grey.'

"As we passed through Scorton Valley, the train stopped for a few minutes, opposite the house of Mr. Fishwick. A gentleman came out, and stood near 'the

brown beech,' whose 'seared leaf' prompted the muse and admonished the spirit of Miss Fishwick to prepare for joys which never fade. Though not near enough to know who he was, the vicinity was enough to make him a friend. I waved my hat, a salutation which he promptly returned; and as the train sped away, I also was admonished of the flight of time; and while ruminating on the early tomb, the unfulfilled plans, and the blighted hopes of the deceased, I exclaimed, 'Poor Miss Fishwick!' 'No,' said my companion, 'say rather, *Rich Miss Fishwick!*' This was a happy turn; it lifted my thoughts from earth to heaven,—from time to eternity. No seared leaf meets her eye in the paradise above!*

"The scenery from Carlisle to Newcastle is in many places beautiful, and there is much more life and domestic comfort spread along its line than on any railroad I have travelled. The river Tyne plays by its side in the most graceful manner for many miles. At one time it is seen moving majestically along, reflecting on its smooth surface the varied objects on its banks: at another, it is heard rushing forward through stones and fragments of fallen rocks. Now, it scoops out a passage so near to the embankment, as to threaten destruction to railroad novelties; and then, in a little, it sweeps away through the adjacent valley, and is so lost amid fields of corn and lofty trees, that the traveller fears it has taken a final farewell of him, and of the din and smoke which accompany his progress. But, no! It returns, not to touch, but to cross his path; leaving him and his train no alternative but either to stop, or pass, by means of great cost. This it does at least six or seven times. But I must leave it, otherwise you will think it has set me playing with a witness. To you only could I write such little things.

"I have just left myself room to say, My kind love to yourself and to all the children."

* He had edited an interesting Memoir of this young lady, which was published at the Wesleyan Book-Room, London.

“ July 29th, 1840.

“THE Conference began this morning. The two prayer-meetings which we have held to-day have been good seasons. Deep humility, lively gratitude and ardent desires have characterized the public devotions, and animated the spirits of all present. My feelings have taken a higher tone, and I feel the Almighty nearer than I did, up to this morning. I hope we shall have a good Conference in the highest and best sense of the word. My part is to abide in Christ my living Head ; and if the spirit of prayer be kept up by me, this will be the sure result.

“I began this letter with pleasure, but I am sorry to say, I must end it with excited feelings of sorrow, fear, and regret. Without one word being previously spoken to me on the subject, and in opposition to my earnest entreaties, the Conference have appointed your poor husband to write the ‘Pastoral Address to the Societies,’ with the assistance of Mr. Reece’s advice. May the Lord help me in a work for which I am altogether unfit ! * I need not say, Pray for me.”

In a letter, dated September 8th, he says :—“ I enter on the labours of this year with a good deal of anxiety, foreseeing that I shall have many interruptions in my regular work. I have a strong desire to re-model my sermons. They are far too long, and they are very unfinished. But the time for this is not yet. Often have I resolved to turn time and opportunity to greater profit ; but successive years pass, and I am only resolving still. I believe the great cure for indolence, as well as other evils, would be a deeper piety, and for this I begin to strive.”

* It is but just to observe that in a letter dated the next day he expresses himself more cheerfully as to his task ; and that he also expresses thankfulness for the help received from the Rev. Thomas Jackson in revising the document, which was readily adopted by the Conference.

To John Richardson, Esq., Hull.

" November 5th, 1840.

" MY DEAR SIR,

" I RECEIVED your friendly communication yesterday, and wish it were in my power to negotiate the matter to which it relates. I regret that you have not *one stranger at least* for your missionary anniversary. But I am satisfied that in times past we have trusted far too much to novelty, and expended much money unnecessarily in getting strangers to grace our platforms. How we are to bring principle into general operation I know not : but most certainly we have much to learn, and more to do, in connection with this subject. Why should our gifts to the cause of the world's conversion depend on the eloquence of a man, or the excitement of an annual meeting ? There is more of whim and childishness in all this than we are willing to acknowledge, or than is creditable to our common Christianity. The injury that is done to our circuits, by this breaking up of our pastoral habits and feelings through the incessant travelling and platform-speaking which this thirst for novelty renders indispensable, it is impossible to describe. But you will think I am giving you a 'stone' instead of 'bread.' I am fully aware that you, above most men, are clear in this matter, otherwise I would not have touched the subject ; at least, on the present occasion, when you need condolence, rather than a lecture on principle. Some of our leading circuits must set an example, and I know of none more likely to do this than yours. Happy shall I be to hear that your preachers have made up their mind to meet the difficulty by '*letting themselves out*,' just as they do when they go from home, and that the friends have done their duty uninfluenced by the disappointment they have experienced. With kindest regards to Mrs. Richardson, I remain, in haste," etc.

However sound his reasoning upon principle in giving, he himself had still to submit to the necessity

of the case ; and in the spring of 1841 he went on a missionary deputation to Guernsey and Jersey, taking with him his daughter Mary, whose health had now become very precarious, in hope that the change of air would be beneficial.

In November of the same year, in compliance with the urgent request of the missionary committee, he went on a tour through Devonshire and Cornwall with one of the General Secretaries, in order to induce the friends of missions in those parts to adopt a more systematic and regular plan of contribution to the mission fund by subscriptions during the year. On his return he wrote me the following brief account of his tour :—

“MANCHESTER, *December 22nd*, 1841.

“So much has been published about the missionary doings in Cornwall, that it is unnecessary I should say much to you on the subject. By the kind providence of God I was led out and brought home in safety. I undertook the work with great reluctance, but now that it is over and past I am thankful that I engaged in it. Our design was not to produce a momentary excitement by stirring speeches and moving narratives, but to correct and mature local plans, to state facts, to lay down principles, and to influence both the judgment and the conscience of our friends in the great work of the world's conversion.

“The design of our journey I trust is in a considerable degree effected. Many have engaged to increase their subscriptions, and a thorough re-organization of the system of collecting has been resolved on ; and a plan, both for town and country, has been framed. I anticipate much good from the whole arrangements.

“The people are generally of an athletic make, but the miners usually begin to exhibit signs of age and debility by the time they reach forty-five. The women are remarkably healthy, and some of them are uncom-

monly beautiful. The dress and dwellings of the miners are plain and homely, but they do not indicate penury. They are clean and comfortable. I did not hear an oath, or see a drunken person, or a shop open on Sunday, or a beggar in any part of the county. Religion has done great things in Cornwall. Methodism is in many parts the established religion; yet we have but few rich men in connection with us. Here, also, God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty. I was greatly smitten with love to Cornish Methodism, and to the Cornish people.

"Our dear Mary is much better. The rest are well. I have just forwarded the third part of my Sabbath papers; and, as you will see, have adopted nearly all your hints and corrections."

On this Cornwall journey, while at Devonport, he sent the following pleasing relation to Mrs. M'OWAN:—

"I STAY here with a kind family. The husband met in one of the young men's classes in City Road. He has told me that I gave him his first ticket; at which time he expressed his determination, if he perished, to perish at the foot of the Cross. In reply, it appears that I said, 'Perish! No; you shall not perish. Banish the thought from your mind. God means to save you. He gave His Son for this very purpose. His Spirit has begun to save you. Your desire to be saved, and your very dread of perishing, are evidences of this. Look to be saved now, and calculate on being saved soon.' Next morning he rejoiced in acceptance with God."

The two following letters were addressed to his son at school:—

"MANCHESTER, *April 9th, 1842.*

"WE received your last the day before yesterday, and, as usual, we gathered round and read it with great

eagerness and pleasure. It was short, but sweet. Shakespeare is full of thought and very fascinating. There are passages in his works which should be committed to memory ; but there are others which should not even be read by youth. I hope you will have wisdom and resolution to choose the good and to refuse the bad.

“ My dear boy, never forget for one moment that ‘one thing is needful.’ We ceaselessly pray for you. Keep the end in view. Set the Lord always before you. Preserve a lively sense of the dying love of the Lord Jesus ever on your mind. Guard against companions who have not the fear of God before their eyes. Make up your mind to bear persecution ; you cannot escape it except by negligence and unfaithfulness.

“ I am very sorry to tell you that dear Mary is very much worse. Her cough is constant and very distressing. She is sadly wasted, and a hectic fever preys upon her whole frame. She is very calm, and fully resigned to the will of her Heavenly Father. I need not say, Pray for her. She often prays for you. Farewell. Be a good boy, and a first-rate scholar.”

“ *April 27th, 1842.*

“ THE last three letters you received from us made you acquainted with the serious illness of our beloved Mary. I need not inform you of the mournfully joyous close. The dark border of this letter has already told you that she is no longer a sufferer here below, but has become a bright and happy inhabitant of heaven. She suffered but little from pain, and departed this life at a quarter past nine last night. Her patience was most exemplary, and her resignation to the will of her Heavenly Father was perfect. Her confidence in her Divine Redeemer was throughout unshaken, and her joy in the prospect of heaven was often rapturous. Generally, however, the character of her experience was that of calm, peaceful confidence and humble hope. I wish you to retire with this letter as soon as possible, and on your knees praise God that you have

a sister in heaven. Of this there is the fullest evidence. Then repeat your acts of dedication to God. Apply again to the blood of sprinkling, and resolve, by the grace of God, to follow, till you meet her in the skies. She often thought and spoke about you, and for a long time she hoped and desired to live till you came home in June. For the last three weeks this hope has been waxing fainter and fainter, and last week she *gave you to the keeping and guidance of your Heavenly Father*. She has left you her Bible and Hymn-Book; and the day before she died, wrote your name in it, with a hand trembling under the combined influence of utter feebleness and of strong sisterly affection. If permitted by her heavenly Lord, I have no doubt that her sainted spirit has visited you at Kingswood. She often said, 'What should I have done if I had neglected to get my sins pardoned before this affliction came on? I could not now seek it with that earnestness and sorrow which are generally necessary to secure the blessing.' She grieved over the indecision and religious trifling which she had seen among young professors. To me she said, 'O, papa, do urge all the young people you meet to give themselves to God, and to follow Him fully! They must be decided. Nothing but *real* religion will do in death. I wish all the young people in Manchester knew how happy God has made me.' I will not say, 'Do not weep;' I should be ashamed of you if you did not grieve to lose such a sister. But, my dear boy, do not allow your sorrow to become excessive. 'Cast your burden on the Lord.' Think not so much of the cold grave and of the beautiful clay as of the happy spirit and the glorious heaven. All of us remember you in tender love, and deeply sympathize with you."

To me he wrote thus:—

"May 10th, 1842.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"BEFORE I set out on my Nottingham deputation, I sit down to inform you, that through the abounding goodness of our Heavenly Father, we are all in tolerable

health. Everything connected with the funeral of our dear Mary was conducted with the greatest solemnity and good order. It was not one of the least of many comforts, that we were enabled to lay her dear remains with the kindred dust of her honoured grandfather Townsend, and of your dear child, at Cheetham Hill. We feel a loneliness which words cannot express, and a heaviness of heart to which we were previously strangers; yet we are exceedingly comforted with the reflection that she hath

‘ Found the rest we toil to find ;
Landed in the arms of God.’

“ Her dying testimony was so glorious, and her expressions of concern for the salvation of youth so fervid, that we felt it to be our duty to propose that her death should be improved in reference to the young people of our congregations. The President (the Rev. Dr. Dixon) entered at once, and in the kindest manner, into the proposal, and on Sunday night last the solemn duty was performed to a crowded congregation in Oxford Road chapel. The text was Eccles. xii. 1. Nothing elaborate was attempted, but great prominence was given to the record of her last days, which we furnished; and the impression made was deep and hallowed. We have had no such service in any of our chapels here for a long time. May the impressions made prove as lasting as they were general !

“ It is my intention to expand the account somewhat, and get it published. The impossibility of getting anything beyond a mere outline into the ‘ Youth’s Instructor ’ is one reason why I have come to this conclusion; and apart from this, I feel that I ought to make known the wonderful manner in which our gracious Lord glorified His grace in her behalf.”

The little work here referred to has passed through several editions, and has been made useful to many young persons.

From the London Conference, July, 1842, he writes home:—

“I feel my mind very solemnly impressed with past circumstances. I meet my fathers and brethren with less buoyancy and delight than on former occasions. I carry about with me a hidden wound, and a secret sense of bereavement which nothing can charm away.”

August 1st. “I preached at Islington from Jer. viii. 22. Five persons found peace with God that night through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. What am I, or my father's house, that Thou, Lord, art mindful of me?”

CHAPTER NINTH.

BRISTOL.

PREVIOUS to the Conference of 1842 he had accepted an invitation to the Bristol North Circuit, in preference to some other invitations, chiefly because it was near to Kingswood, where his son was at school. This arrangement being approved by Conference, he accordingly removed to that city. Towards the close of the year our dear father died suddenly at Crieff. He and our beloved mother had lived together fifty-one years. Her death is mentioned on page 154 of this volume. Six years had passed away since her removal, and he had now lived to the advanced age of eighty-two; his third son remaining with him to the close of his life. He was very reserved on religious subjects, and made no distinct profession of spiritual enjoyments, though on many occasions he could not conceal that he felt much; and there was good ground for hope in his death. The next letter from my brother to me refers to this; and also relates a pleasing incident, descriptive of the discipline and order maintained in the school for the education of the ministers' sons at Kingswood, near Bristol, now removed to Bath.

“BRISTOL, *December 5th*, 1842.

“A FEW days after your last favour arrived I received a letter from sister Catharine, in which she says that

our letters were at all times received by our dear father 'with warm affection,' and that 'he used to hear them read with tears streaming down his cheeks.' For a long time before he was laid aside, he visited Catharine and her husband (who feared God) every day, unless he was so poorly as to be unable to walk so far.

"We heard from Kingswood on Saturday. The boys are well, and are doing well." (One or two of my own sons were there at the time.) "On the night of Tuesday last Mr. Budgett's warehouses, etc., at Kingswood, took fire. The conflagration was terrible; and all the men on the school-premises ran off to render assistance. The boys, who had just retired to bed, rose, and grouped round the windows, to see the great sight. Mrs. N——, the governor's daughter, went up to them, and stated that her father was kept ignorant of the fire, and that it was their wish he should not know, lest it should bring on *another* fit; but, she added, 'it will be impossible for us to keep it from him if he hears the slightest noise in your rooms. Now, my boys, I appeal to your honour, and to your feelings of respect for my father and your governor, and request that you will retire to your beds.' The request was instantly complied with; and though the flames raged for three hours, not a boy put a foot on the floor, save one little fellow, who got on his knees, because, as he said, he was afraid the fire was coming nearer, and he was not prepared to die.

"The work of God in this circuit is certainly improving, but we have at present but small hope of an immediate increase. There are several great barriers in the way of a revival, and whether we shall succeed in removing them is doubtful. My own usefulness is limited by the defects of my personal piety. I see my duty, and know my privilege, but I fail in performing the one and enjoying the other."

Having been appointed by the preceding Conference as one of the missionary deputation to the south of Ireland, he set out on this work in the beginning of

April, 1848. A journal of his proceedings in that country is furnished in a series of letters to Mrs. M'Owan.

“DUBLIN, *April 10th*, 1848.

“I HAVE now spent a Sunday in Dublin. Yesterday I preached twice. I had no special liberty, but after the evening service five or six persons came up to the communion-rail professing penitence.... This morning I rode for the first time in an Irish car. It is much more comfortable than I had conceived. Of course it leaves one wholly exposed to the weather. To-morrow I go to Athlone by coach, and for the rest I trust in Providence. Yesterday was Palm Sunday, and I saw Popery in high style. *Yew* is universally substituted for palm, and the priests bless an immense quantity of the branches of that tree, which they sell to dealers, who again dispose of it in the streets and at the doors of the chapels. I cannot number the times I was importuned to ‘buy a twig of blessed palm.’ There are one or two privileged dealers who stand at the porch of each chapel, and it is no uncommon thing for them to sally forth, with stick in hand, and beat off the common dealers who come too near in their eagerness to obtain customers. The men and boys had sprigs in their hats; the women carry it in their hands. The chapels were crowded most of the day.

“The city in many respects surpasses my expectations. The public buildings are noble, the streets are wide and spacious, and I have seen much less of squalid poverty and importunate beggary than I anticipated.”

“PARSONSTOWN, *April 12th*, 1848.

“On Tuesday morning, at half-past six, I parted with my Dublin friends, and took coach for Athlone. During the night, snow to the depth of three inches had fallen. The air was very cold, but I was sheltered, having secured an inside place. We passed the Phoenix Park on leaving the city. The branches of the trees were loaded with snow; and those which had put forth

their leaves or blossoms, bore so much that they appeared to be covered with myriads of white roses, which, mingled with the green tints here and there visible, had a very fine effect. Many of the trees are large and lofty. The road along which we travelled for about twenty miles was interesting, and in some parts very much so. But the wretched hovels of the poor constantly forced the conviction on the mind that some evil genius reigned here, and that a hidden cause blighted and neutralized the naturally fertile and beautiful scenery around. Some of the cabins had no windows, and others, in which there were some openings, had them closed up with stones, a board, or rags. Many had no chimneys or windows at all. How different is all this from the poorest part of England! No rose-trees adorning the walls, no pretty little flower-beds,—but clay, mouldering, dirty clay, constituted the material of the vast majority of the dwellings we passed. Some of them were formed so as to defy description; and we saw a few which were dug out of the peat-bog; *i. e.*, a sufficient quantity was removed to make a hole large enough to hold a man and woman, with three or four children. A kind of roof was thrown over, covered with thatch, and, with no other masonry, it became a human habitation.

“In the course of the day we passed through Maynooth; a poor, dirty, miserable-looking place. The Popish College is extensive, but void of beauty or external interest. It is erected in the vicinity of an old castle, and has a stream of water running past. Its large domain is surrounded by a stone wall. We saw no priests either here or on any other part of the road. A poor woman, however, wished to invest me with the priestly character, and said she was sure she was not mistaken. I told her I had no pence. ‘Well, your reverence,’ said she, ‘a sixpence will do just as well for the poor woman; and what is that to a gentleman?’ This was spoken with such humour that I could not help laughing. She also was tickled; and, taking up the corner of her shawl, covered her face to

hide her own fun. As we proceeded we every now and then passed cabins in ruins, caused in most instances by the landlord taking the ground into his own hands, or by the enlargement of the farm.

“About four o'clock we reached Athlone. In the evening we held our meeting, which was small, but interesting. Methodism is depressed and despised in Athlone beyond what I can describe. I was astir next morning by five o'clock, and on an Irish car by a quarter to six. Mr. M'Dowell, one of the Irish missionaries, rode with me; and his conversation was interesting and instructive. Our journey was about thirty miles in length, a good part of which lay through boggy lands. There were, however, some very beautiful spots: and, from one elevation, we had a view of a part of five or six counties. We saw one bog which extended about fifty miles. When within two miles of Parsonstown, while Mr. M'Dowell and I were absorbed in conversation, our horse, without a moment's warning, came down, we following one upon another, two on one side, and two on the other. The horse lay still, and we all got up without injury. No fall could have been more complete, and no preservation more singular. The car was broken, and the harness also; the poor horse was hurt, but we escaped. My hat saved my head; otherwise I should have been injured. Mr. M'Dowell and I walked into the town, and took up our quarters at the house of Mr. F. On hearing of our adventure Mrs. F. said, 'So you have had a specimen of Irish travelling.' Her daughter, a lively girl, expressed her surprise that we had not examined the car before we started. 'And sure,' said her mother, 'that would not have been sufficient; the gentlemen would also have needed to cross-question the horse about his intention to lie down.' Mr. Ferguson also told me that, having hired a car late at night, he and his friend got in, and, at the first start, the horse fell and injured the vehicle so that it was impossible to proceed. On helping Mr. F. and his friend out, the carman put his hand to his hat, and

said, 'Your fare, gentlemen.' 'For what?' said Mr. F. 'For a fair set down,' replied Paddy. Thus do these merry people joke from morning to night. At one o'clock I preached, and at half-past six we held the meeting. Methodism is respectable here, but the Society is small.

"Parsonstown is beautifully situated, in the immediate vicinity of the residence of Lord Rosse. We have walked over his domain, and seen the exterior of his castle. He is fond of general science, but devotes himself especially to astronomy. He has a telescope thirty feet long and several tons in weight. He is constructing one much larger, the speculum of which was lately cast, and is said to weigh three tons. We saw it, and went over his work-rooms.

"I must conclude, though I have not done. The people here are all kind; and though the east wind blows, the weather is fine. The roads are good, and I am told the finest part of the country lies before me."

"ROSCREA, *April 14th*, 1843.

"I HAVE received your letter, and sit down to write a few lines. At Athlone I was plainly informed that I was about to enter among the 'wild Irish;' and at Parsonstown I was told that I was then on the borders of the disturbed districts. Yesterday we passed a spot where murder had been committed a short time ago, in open day. The Popish inhabitants, I am told, are all armed, and the utmost mystery shrouds their proceedings. When they assault houses for weapons, which they often do, they take nothing else; and when they perpetrate murder, they leave their victim without even examining whether he has money on his person or not.

"Our meetings have been held in peace, and our friends are cheerful and happy in the service of their heavenly Lord. The county of Tipperary is much more fertile and far better cultivated than the parts through which I passed to Parsonstown. The cottages here are built of stone, and there are signs of comfort visible around

them. Yesterday we passed a singular tree, called by the people 'the Deer Horns.' It is an oak; two stems spring from the same root, and grow about three feet apart till they reach a height of about fifteen feet; then they unite, and form a common stem, from which branches shoot out, resembling the horns of the deer. The tree has been in a withered, leafless state for years, and our driver gravely informed us that it was planted when Adam was a boy. Tradition says, the fairies have been accustomed to dance round it nightly, and the people hold it in such veneration that it would be counted sacrilege to cut off the smallest twig.

"Our meeting at Cloughjordan was well attended and productive. Protestantism here is strong, and Methodism is reviving.

"The violet and the primrose abound in the hedges; the ivy creeps up almost every wall, and the veteran oak and sturdy ash are very generally entwined by this fair but insidious parasite.

"Every day I hear Irish witticisms, but I have not time to record them. Here is a specimen: Some time ago a good, simple man of the neighbourhood was standing one day by a gate in one of his fields, when a fox-hunting party came up in great haste. Perceiving three parsons in the company, he opened the gate *slowly*, and as they were passing through he drily said, 'The wily fox will not die to-day, I perceive, without benefit of clergy.'

"I am as happy in my work as a deep and abiding sense of insufficiency will permit. My best love to yourself and the children."

"LIMERICK, *April 18th*, 1843.

"LAST night I finished my work in this city, and to-day journey by coach to Tralee. When I wrote last, it was from Roscrea, a rather beautiful town. Protestantism there is in the ascendant, and our Society, though small, is respectable and influential. One of the most perfect of the Irish 'Round Towers' is here. Some time ago the Papists entered on an extensive

examination in the vicinity, in hopes of finding the bones of a saint who, tradition says, was buried there. Bones were found, and they were certified by professional testimony to be the bones of a man, and not of an ass; but whether they belonged to a saint or a murderer is still undecided. When our collection was announced as being upwards of £29, the chairman struck the table, exclaiming, 'There never was such a collection in Roscrea since the Round Tower was founded.'

"The journey to Limerick was by car, and the distance being long was fatiguing. Sabbath was a heavy day, though not without some good degree of spiritual enjoyment. The meeting last night was thinly attended, partly owing to a horse-race, which engrossed the whole attention of at least twenty-five thousand of the inhabitants during the day, and partly to the anticipated arrival of O'Connell, which event took place in the evening. Popery is rampant here, and the Church party are far more opposed to us than they are to the Papists; indeed this is the case almost everywhere."

"TRALEE, *April 20th.*

"I sit down to write a few lines to you before I leave Tralee for Killarney. My journey from Limerick to this town was safe, but not interesting. The day was cloudy, except for short intervals, and the country was dreary. There were, however, some beautiful spots, and the road was enlivened occasionally by crowds of men, women, and children going to meet O'Connell, who was expected to harangue on the 'Repeal' in a town on our route. The mud huts were adorned with branches of chestnut and other early trees. The more respectable houses had no such adornments. In the estimation of sober men this cause is making great progress.

"When at Limerick, I visited the cathedral, which is large, but not elegant. From the steeple we had a most magnificent view of the hills of Kerry, and of the surrounding country. I was told the following story:—

In the burial-ground of the cathedral there are a few large trees in which the rooks build. Some time ago, the churchwarden and other officials met in the vestry to decide whether they ought not to cut down some of these trees. During the whole time of the debate within, the rooks were clamouring without, and as soon as the vote was taken that a certain number of the trees should be cut down, they proceeded to carry off their nests from the condemned trees, and rested not till every vestige of them was lodged safely in those which were reserved. Two respectable witnesses averred to the truth of the above.....You have it as I got it. Rooks abound in this country.

“Limerick consists of an old and a new town. The former is crowded and dirty : the latter is neat, and the streets are spacious. I saw the stone on which King John signed the Limerick Treaty. Tralee is a large town. Not one in ten of the inhabitants are Protestants. The doors of the houses are very generally marked with crosses and sacred letters. Among ten thousand Papists, it is doubtful, I am told, whether ten copies of the Holy Scriptures could be found. The people are poor and wretched in the extreme..... The mountains in the neighbourhood are lofty and picturesque. The sea approaches to within a mile or two of the town, and that distance is cut through by a canal. Yesterday I visited the ruins of an abbey and a cathedral which adorned the vicinity. From the tower of the abbey we had a glorious view of the adjacent mountains and the neighbouring bays of Dingle and Tralee. While the distant scenery was grand, the nearer objects were interesting. Just *under* us the rooks were hatching their eggs, feeding their young, and sporting in the sunshine, utterly regardless of us, or our prying eyes. A fine swan was sailing in silent majesty on a sheet of water in the grounds, and the mansion of the proprietor stood within a few hundred yards.

“I have hitherto got through the fatigue and extra labour far better than I could have expected. The

preachers are holy men of God, and it is a privilege to have intercourse with them.

"To-day we go to Killarney. The weather is fine, and I anticipate great enjoyment. I shall have a day's rest there, which will be the first I have had since I came to Ireland.

"Yesterday Mr. S. told me that he witnessed the following scene. A priest came out of a public-house, and staggered towards his horse. He made several ineffectual attempts to mount, saying, 'In the name of Holy Mary, I mount.' A more vigorous effort being made, but not well directed, he pitched over on the other side of the horse. On rising he remarked, 'Ah, Mary, when you are kind, you are too kind!'

"My time is up, and I can only add, that I generally succeed in keeping up a sense of the Divine Presence, and am enabled to do my work as unto the Lord. With kindest love, etc."

"YOUGHAL, *April 27th.*

"I RECEIVED your letter on Monday, and was glad to find that our Heavenly Father still held you and the children in His holy keeping. It affords me no small pleasure to announce that I am about to start for Clonmel, which is the last place on my list.

"This is a large and interesting town. It was anciently surrounded by a wall, and defended by a castle. It is famous for having been the birth-place of Sir Robert Boyle, and the residence of Sir Walter Raleigh. It was here he planted the first potatoes on his return from America. Yesterday I visited the house in which he lived, and walked through the church in which he worshipped. A great part of the edifice is now in ruins. The town is Protestant to a considerable extent, and Methodism is both respectable and increasing.

"My visit to Cork was singularly pleasant. Cork reminds me somewhat of Bristol; only it is smaller, and much more finely situated. The hill on which a considerable part of it is built, is not so high as

Kingsdown, but the fine river which flows in front makes ample amends. Lofty trees and noble mansions abound in its vicinity. With the exception of the Court House, the Roman Catholic chapels are the finest buildings in the city. Our congregations are large, and the Society is intelligent, pious, and united.

"I wrote the above at intervals, and was obliged to discontinue it, to mount the car for Clonmel. We have now reached that town, a distance of thirty-one miles.

"I have not forgotten the scenes of this time last year," (the death of his daughter Mary,) "and have felt my heart softened and improved while I have been retracing them in memory.

"Give my warmest love to my daughters, and accept of the same yourself. And believe me to be, as ever," etc.

With a few general remarks extracted from a letter to me I conclude the account of his journey to Ireland.

"BRISTOL, *May 1st*, 1843.

"I RETURNED on Saturday last, and am thankful to say that I have not suffered by my incessant engagements, only much fatigued. Having many letters to write, I can only add a few particulars. I found the friends in every place exceedingly kind. The preachers are a noble-minded, hard-working class of men. They are staunch haters of Popery: but at present, and for some time back, they have met with more direct opposition from the High Church than from the Popish party. The Papists are, of course, the irreconcilable enemies of Methodism; but their hatred is ancient, and on that account, perhaps, it is less active: whereas the Church party have suddenly, but generally, adopted the opinion that Methodism is no longer needed in the land, and that it must not only be checked, but swallowed up. They will find it a tough morsel; for our people are, almost to a man, determined to give up even an occasional attendance on Church services, and are resolved to live and die the supporters and

defenders of Wesleyan Methodism. In the mean time, many of them have to suffer persecution in various forms. Though the Church party are thus wantonly assaulting their friends, they are really weak in the land : and notwithstanding their attempts to propitiate Popery, it is very questionable whether the whole tithe system by which they are at present supported, may not be broken up ere five years transpire. From all I heard, I could not avoid coming to the conclusion, that the Church of Ireland is not worth saving.

“Popery is almost every where dominant and on the increase. Its priesthood are fully awake, and their power over the people is all but omnipotent. In some parishes the people have protested against their exorbitant exactions, and a new tariff of Priests’ dues has been presented to their *Reverences*, with strong expressions of dissatisfaction with the present state of things. This is a sign of life ; but it is almost certain to miscarry. The income of the priests is generally from £300 to £900. In the rural parishes nothing is given to the people in the shape of preaching oftener than about once in three months.

“Temperance has made astonishing progress : so that drunkenness in many places has become a strange sin. But even this is perverted to the purposes of Sabbath desecration. Processions, headed by bands of music, promenade on the Lord’s day, disturbing those who would worship God, and attracting crowds of idlers, who commit all kinds of excesses. On the whole, the political and religious prospects of Ireland are very gloomy. And what the end will be, who can tell ?”

While visiting the Portsmouth District on his missionary deputation, he writes home :—

“PORTSMOUTH, *November 4th*, 1843.

“ON Sunday I preached twice, and had some degree of liberty. Monday was very wet ; but I visited the ‘Victory’ and the ‘St. Vincent’ ships of war. The

‘Victory,’ you will remember, was that in which Lord Nelson died. The spot on the upper deck where he fell is marked out by a brass plate; and the little cabin where he breathed his last is kept sacred, and is shown to visitors. The beam on which the dying hero leaned his head, has the solemn fact printed upon it. The dissecting table which was then covered with wounded men, stands close by. What a place to meet death in! What a scene to be surrounded with at that awful moment! The ship is now wholly unfit for service, and is devoted to the training of young men and boys for the navy. The ‘St. Vincent’ is in sailing trim, and has just returned from Cork. It is a ship of the largest size.

“To-day we visited the docks, every part of which we found full of interest. The order which reigns, and the ingenuity which is displayed in the machinery, exceeds belief. The block-making is especially worthy of notice. A block which formerly took a man a whole day to finish, can now be made in the space of eight minutes, and it is made better in every respect than it was on the old plan. The sight of such a dockyard as this justifies and sustains the pride we take in the name of Britain. To-night we have our Portsea meeting. If we are favoured with the presence of our Divine Master, we shall doubtless have a good one. I endeavour to do His work in His name, and under His Holy Spirit’s influence, but I am very dissatisfied with my success. Accept of my undecaying love.”

“PORTSMOUTH, *November 8th, 1843.*

“On Thursday Mr. Connelly and myself went over the ‘Naval Victualling Office,’ and, like all the government offices and depôts I have seen, it is worthy of our great nation. The grinding and baking departments, especially, are conducted on a scale which for magnitude and perfect order exceeds all that a stranger can imagine. In the space of forty minutes, a sack of wheat is converted into flour, dough, and biscuits, and sacked, ready to be sent on board. The turning of it

into dough is accomplished in less than four minutes; the kneading it by means of rollers, in about an equal space of time; and it is fifteen minutes in the oven. There are nine ovens, and each of them bakes about two hundred weight of bread at a time: so that about eighteen hundredweights of biscuit are turned out every forty minutes. The whole process is accomplished by one steam-engine.

"My visit to Chichester was pleasant and interesting. We saw the cathedral, which is large, and in tolerable repair, but not by any means so beautiful or splendid as some of the others. We visited the library, and saw the autograph of Cranmer; the portraits of all the Popish bishops who ruled in the diocese, from Wilfride down to the Reformation; and the likenesses of all the kings of England from Henry VII. down to George III.

"We also viewed the tombstone of Chillingworth. We entered the 'heretic's cell,' a dungeon adjoining a large room which was used as a council-chamber, and in which there still stands the oaken chair from which the sentence of torture or of death may often have proceeded from the bishop's lips. The part of the cathedral appropriated for worship is largely adorned with gilded and carved work, which is in good condition. It will not hold more than three hundred.

"Our chapel is very small, but it is neat and well kept. The audience was respectable and attentive to the close. As usual, my intercourse with my brethren in the ministry raised them in my esteem. Give my parental love to those at home."

In 1844 he came up to London by invitation from the Missionary Committee to preach on the Wednesday evening at City Road, and take part in the other Anniversary services and General Meeting of the Society. As I was then resident at City Road Chapel, he lodged with us. On April 25th, he wrote to Mrs. M'OWAN:—

“ON Tuesday brother was called upon to visit the Rev. Henry Moore. The messenger urged that he should come immediately, as it was feared he was dying. I also went to take a last farewell of the venerable man. When we entered he was dozing; but on opening his eyes, he looked eagerly at me, and attempted to speak, but was unable. He then intimated that I should come near; I did so; and he grasped my hand with fervour. He repeated this motion twice while we remained. I asked if we might pray, and he answered, ‘Yes.’ He breathes as softly as a child, and is, in appearance, what you might suppose Isaac or Jacob to have been when they were about to sleep with their fathers.

“I got through the service of last night with less perturbation and embarrassment than I feared. Though the most formidable service is now over, you must not restrain prayer. I wish to retain a sense of my dependence on my Almighty Saviour.”

“*April 27th, 1844.*

“MR. MOORE died this morning, and is to be interred this day week. Brother had been again sent for, and administered the sacrament to him at his request. He was a great man, and I have no doubt has entered upon a great reward. Yesterday, I heard Mr. Hamilton, of the Scottish Free Church, preach in our Great Queen Street chapel, from 1 Thess. v. 18. A splendid sermon.”

CHAPTER TENTH.

ISLINGTON, LONDON.

AFTER the Conference of 1844 he removed to the Islington Circuit, London, as Superintendent, with Messrs. W. M. Bunting, Alfred Barrett, and Henry Kirkland, as his colleagues. A more loving and congenial pastorate could scarcely have been found throughout the Connexion. And having been preceded by Mr. Robert Wood, one of the most orderly of Superintendents, he was likely to find his way smooth and pleasant.

Here, too, were many of his old friends, but recently separated from the City Road Circuit. He soon endeared himself to his flock by pastoral visitation, in which it was his custom to pray with the families, always showing kindly sympathy and fatherly regard for the children.

We may here observe, that during the whole of his ministry, until the feebleness of age obliged him to desist, he met the young people on Saturday afternoon, when he opened to them the Scriptures, and spoke of the love of Jesus, and their need of such a Saviour. It is known that many date their first desires after salvation from their attendance at these meetings. At Islington they were made peculiarly useful.

Nor did he soon forget the people he had left. In the arms of love and faith he continued to bear them up before God; and especially such as were afflicted.

The following is part of a letter found among his papers, addressed to one of the excellent of the earth, the late Mrs. James Wood, of Bristol, showing how he remembered these invalid friends, and how earnestly he wished them to be comforted with that consolation wherewith he had been himself comforted of God.

“ISLINGTON, *November 20th, 1844.*

“DEAR MRS. WOOD,

“I CAN no longer satisfy myself by a daily remembrance of you in my prayers. I long to know how you are supported under the burden of affliction which it has pleased our Almighty Father to lay upon you. I fear that He has not yet, in Fatherly pity, lightened your load; giving you sweet peace by day and refreshing rest by night. In pleading that your affliction may be *removed*, I confess that I have not much liberty; but in asking that you may be *comforted* and *sustained* while it lasts, I have ‘boldness and access with confidence.’ A line from Mr. Wood, or yourself, (if it would not distress you,) saying how you are, would be a great favour. Meantime, let us remember, that afflictions do not come upon the children of God because He could not have prevented them, but because—all things considered,—time and eternity taken into account—He thinks it best to permit, or even to send them. He chastens us for our profit, that we may, in a more eminent degree, be partakers of His holiness. As vines are made more fruitful by pruning, and as metals are refined by fire, so God weans His people from the world, and arrays them with the glorious beauties of holiness, by keeping them in the school of affliction. It was when God spoke to Job out of the whirlwind, that he said, ‘Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.’

“But our covenant God, while intent upon making us holy, does not overlook the means and modes of imparting consolation. No. He ‘giveth songs in the

night.' He makes the bow of promise bright in proportion to the blackness of the cloud on which it is impressed. Most of His covenant titles have been chosen in reference to the consolation of His people. Thus He is styled, 'The Comforter,' 'A Refuge from the storm,' 'A very present Help in trouble,' 'The Good Shepherd,' 'The God of Peace—of all Grace—of Patience—of Consolation.' The Scriptures, as you know, abound with promises to God's tried ones: 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you:' 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all:' 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me:' 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.' With such 'comfortable words and kind' does the God of Love speak to my dear friend. May all the promises of God be yea and amen to her, in Christ Jesus!"

This mother in Israel, when a child, had enjoyed the honour and privilege of often standing between the knees of the venerable John Wesley, whose prayers in her behalf were answered in her early conversion. Her first husband was the much-esteemed Thomas Roberts, Esq., of Bristol. She died the April after the above letter was written. Shortly before her departure, she exclaimed, "I am happy, happy; very happy! Jesus is mine, and I am His!"

In the spring of 1845 we find our dear brother again engaged in his loved work of pleading for our Foreign Missions, having been appointed by Conference to visit the Liverpool District. From Liverpool therefore he writes home.

“ March 29th, 1845.

“By the good Providence of God I reached this town last night in safety. The missionary collections in each place we have hitherto visited have surpassed those of last year. In all the localities the general interests of Methodism are on the advance. We spent two days at Scorton, under the hospitable roof of Mr. and Mrs. Fishwick. Mrs. Fishwick is very poorly, but she is ripening in piety. Scorton is truly a Christian village. There is neither a public-house nor a beer-shop, nor a police officer, within the precincts of the township; nor is the want of any of them felt. The people are, for the most part, in Mr. Fishwick's employ. I here saw primroses for the first time this season.”

Writing from the Conference in Leeds this year, he says :—

“SUNDAY was a glorious day in Leeds. The influx of strangers was very great. I went to hear the President's sermon, but could not get beyond the seats at the back of the pulpit. Here I stood, despairing of obtaining a seat. But before the prayers were ended, I got another post, being called upon to go and preach to a crowd of people in the large vestry below. This I did, whilst Mr. Young stood without, and ministered the word of life to a multitude who could not enter either chapel or vestry. Similar extra services were held at other chapels. In the afternoon not fewer than six congregations were assembled in and about Oxford Place chapel. My appointment in the evening was St. Peter's chapel, which was crowded out and out; so that one of the brethren had to preach outside to hundreds who could not gain admittance. I felt oppressed in prospect of the service, but had liberty in its performance. The Ex-President's (Dr. Bunting's) sermon yesterday morning was a noble specimen of Gospel preaching. The power of God was present in an eminent degree.”

The preparation of the Pastoral Address was again committed to him by this Conference.

In the spring of 1846 he was again on the Missionary Deputation to Cornwall, in company with Dr. Jobson. He writes :—

“As usual the collections are good. The congregations are crowded beyond anything you can imagine, and the excitement sometimes rises to a storm. At St. Just, on the Tuesday, most of the shops were shut during the services of the afternoon and evening. Brother Jobson's voice broke down early last week, and he has had to hide himself for two days. He is now in the yoke, but both of us are in danger of being laid up. I am now enjoying a day of rest at the house of Mr. Smith, the author of ‘The Religion of Ancient Britain,’ etc., and am truly thankful that I have such an asylum, for I need the relaxation. I have devoted myself entirely to my missionary work, and have abstained from all sight-seeing journeys and engagements, with the exception of a visit to the Land's End and the Loggan Stone.”

In April, 1847, he went to take part in the Missionary Anniversary services at Manchester, and wrote home an account of his labours :—

“At Cheetham Hill chapel in the morning we had a good congregation, and a ‘good time.’ In the afternoon I went to dear Mary's grave. I was humbled to think that I had not more fully improved the mournful but impressive dispensation, and resolved, in Divine strength, to be more faithful and diligent in time to come. I afterwards went into the school, and addressed the children. At night I preached at Irwell Street. The congregation was large, and I had liberty in speaking, but not so much of preaching power as in the morning. The people, I fear, were rather pleased than profited. I felt but little impressed, and was, therefore, disappointed and humbled. The results, for the day, to the Mission funds was favourable.”

Liverpool Conference, July 29th, 1847.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“MR. GEORGE SCOTT, who is now stationed at Aberdeen, has informed me that a small Society has existed in Stonehaven, (a fishing village, a stage south of Aberdeen,) ever since the time I preached there in the open air, on the evening of the day I left Aberdeen on my way to Dunfermline, in 1820. I *walked* to Stonehaven in the afternoon, and preached in the evening, and again at five o'clock in the morning; and it appears that two men were awakened, and ultimately converted to God. They applied, by my advice, to the Aberdeen ministers for a regular visit, and the formation of a Society was the result. One of the men died lately in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to his dying day referred with gratitude to those services which proceeded from the influence of zeal and an ill-furnished purse, under the wise and gracious Providence of God.”

Referring to the unsettled and threatening aspect of affairs at this time, he writes to me:—

“You would not be greatly delighted with the hesitancy indicated by the Dissenting members of the Evangelical Alliance on the Sabbath question in the recent meeting at Edinburgh. It augurs ill both for Dissent and for the Alliance that discussions of this kind are of such frequent occurrence; and that they are settled so much in the spirit of compromise. Unless the Lord speedily undertake for us, either in the way of pouring out His Holy Spirit on the friends of truth, or by disuniting and breaking up the camp of the enemy, dark days and troublous times are certainly before us. The millenarianism of the Evangelical party in the Established Church, and the ultra-liberalism of the Dissenters, are elements fraught with evil; and though very different in their nature and character, they both tend to produce the same

results, namely, a Socinianizing and sceptical mode of interpreting Scripture, and the disruption of the bands of Christian love. Even now Dr. —, in an article in a newspaper of this week, fiercely denounces Methodism as a system hostile to the civil interests of mankind, and he is about to resign his pastoral charge to take up the editorship of a weekly journal! Among ourselves there is an evil leaven at work,—a murmuring, rebellious spirit is astir, and the hearts of the peaceably disposed are failing for fear. Divine influence has been extensively forfeited by indulgence of the love of the world,—a decay of personal and family religion has followed,—the relapsed are unhappy, and instead of censuring themselves, they rise up against the ministry and the system. The times favour the movement, and I fear it will proceed with accelerated power for some time to come. Our only refuge is in God; and if we resort unto Him, He will help us as heretofore.”

CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

LIVERPOOL, SOUTH.

By the Conference of 1847 he was appointed to the Liverpool South Circuit. In the early part of 1848 his kind and highly esteemed friend, Dr. Hunter, of Islington, having been removed to his heavenly rest, he addressed the following letter to his daughters, which contains a just tribute to the memory of their honoured parent :—

“ LIVERPOOL, *April 1st*, 1848.

“ MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

“ I CANNOT forbear expressing my deep sympathy with you and the other members of your family under the heavy bereavement you have just suffered. How uncertain is the tenure by which we hold this life ! According to human appearances, no man in Islington was more likely, in September last, to see a good old age, than your dear father. The news of his affliction and death came upon us like a thunder-clap. But how consoling to know that he was prepared for the summons ! He walked with God, and he is not, for God hath taken him. In him, religion was an inward life ; it inspired his principles, formed his habits, directed his conduct, and constituted his chief source of enjoyment. Inheriting the honour which cometh from God, he was dead to the praise of men. Fully convinced that religion was the one thing needful, he subordinated worldly good, professional reputation, social influence, and passing events to the acquisition of its

blessings in his soul, and to the promotion of its interests in the world. While he loved the whole catholic Church, and honoured personal piety wherever he found it, he loved Methodism with peculiar affection, because he thought it one of the purest and most efficient forms of Christianity with which the world had ever been blessed. For instituted and legitimate authority he had a high reverence; and to faction, whether in religion or politics, he was an uncompromising opponent. He held fast that which was good, and meddled not with them that were given to change. In our business meetings I often admired the transparency of his thoughts and the forcible simplicity of his language.

"As a friend he was faithful, as a counsellor he was judicious, and as a Christian he was thoroughly consistent. In the Holy Scriptures he was well read; and he had studied the subject of theology beyond most men in his profession. While he had a just dread of whatever was wild and fanatical in religious theories, he delighted in the simplest notes of Christian experience, and often in our lovefeasts did he edify others by declaring what God had done for his soul. On our Quarterly Fast days, I have known him so to order his professional calls as to be present at two of the prayer-meetings. His kind attentions, and often gratuitous services, to invalid ministers, while they awakened feelings of gratitude in the hearts of those who shared them, entitled him to the thanks of many churches; for, under God, they contributed to preserve many a valuable life.

"But, my dear young friends, I ought not to attempt, to you at least, to describe the Christian virtues and multiplied kindnesses of him whose loved likeness can never be effaced from your fond recollections. He honoured all whom he favoured with his friendship, and he has left a rich legacy to his children in the prayers he offered up at the throne of grace, in the sterling worth of his character, and in the good will which he secured from all who knew him.

“With sympathizing regards, in which Mrs. M‘Owan unites.”

When on the Missionary Deputation to the Birmingham District this year he wrote home from Madeley,—

“I WRITE within half a mile of the sainted Fletcher’s tomb and former residence. Yesterday I visited the church and vicarage. I stood in his pulpit, and sat in his study chair. I saw the desk on which he wrote his ‘Checks,’ the corner of the room in which he generally prayed, and the chamber from which his happy spirit winged its flight to the realms of glory.

“The village still contains many of the cottages in which he conversed and prayed, and some of the mansions from which he was excluded by their haughty and ungodly possessors. His name is still as ointment poured forth among the people, and the epitaphs in the churchyard bear testimony to his ministerial usefulness. I have visited no spot for interment, if I except that in City Road, London, in which I have found so many and such sublime testimonies to the praise of redeeming love, and the sanctifying power of the Spirit of holiness. It is notorious that all the rich and influential families who set the man of God at nought have wasted away, and, in some instances, miserably perished. There is not at present one of these families in the neighbourhood. ‘The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.’

“The village is beautifully situated, and the cottages are neater, and much more clean and comfortable, than those of miners generally are. There are several mansion-like houses of ancient date still standing; and one of them was pointed out to us as the residence of King Charles after the battle of Worcester. Madeley has had a succession of pious and evangelical clergymen since the death of Fletcher.”

From the Hull Conference of 1848 he wrote home:—

"YESTERDAY I preached in one of the principal dissenting chapels in the town, and was enabled to set forth the truth as it is in Jesus with about as much freedom as if the congregation had been composed of Methodists.

"To our own people it was a high day indeed. In the afternoon and evening I heard two noble sermons. The first by Mr. Rattenbury, and the second by Mr. Thomas Jackson. In the afternoon the congregation was moved in a most extraordinary manner. At different times a thousand voices shouted, 'Amen! Glory be to God!' and from as many faces the tears were streaming down."

During Mr. M'Owan's residence in the Liverpool South Circuit, the notorious "Fly Sheets" and similar anonymous publications were scattered throughout the Connexion, for the purpose of awakening suspicion and distrust towards the ministers of the body, and the administration of its government in general. These hostile influences were, of course, made to bear with considerable energy on the Liverpool Societies. To preserve his circuit as much as possible, in these perilous times, our dear brother repaired to the throne of grace, and pleaded earnestly for the protection of his charge from the threatening dangers, and for direction in his endeavours to secure this end. These prayers, he had reason to believe, were graciously answered; whilst in the exercise of firmness, and fidelity to the cause of God, combined with kindness and prudence towards all, much evil was prevented. But these painful subjects will soon force themselves upon our attention in a more serious aspect.

To his son, now entering upon manhood, he writes:—

"LIFE is a probation, and therefore it abounds not only with different and important duties, but with various

trials, which test us physically, mentally, and spiritually; but none of these tests can be said to be really intolerable, or incapable of improvement. There are drawbacks also in every state of comfort or enjoyment. The thorn accompanies the rose, and a drop of gall mingles with every cup of pleasure, and there are weeds on the fairest spot on earth, sufficient to convince us that it is not paradise. Much of the wisdom of life lies in the maintenance of moderation in our expectations from the creature, and in a studious endeavour to improve crosses and privations to the mortification of our self-love, and the quickening of our desires after God and heaven. The more steadily we keep the great end of life in view, the more independent shall we be of circumstances, whether favourable or unfavourable. The obscurity of neglect and the school of adversity have contributed more to the production of shining talent and of eminent piety than patronage or wealth. Perhaps no one ever made much out either in the Church or the world who had not a large share of trials of one kind or another. The servants of God may be assured that they come upon them, because, taking time and eternity into account, He has seen it best that they should be endured; but as nothing happens without His knowledge, so in each trial He is ready to give His Almighty aid. It is only by having His strength made perfect in our weakness, that we acquire mastery and command over ourselves, ability to forgive offences, and to render good for evil. Difficulties and disappointments serve to teach us our own weakness, and our need of constant help and solace from above. They remind us that earth is not our home, and that the business of this life, with its thorny cares, is not our chief business."

At the Manchester Conference, 1849, he was elected, on the ground of nomination, into the number of the hundred ministers who compose the legal Conference. This honour was then only conferred upon ministers

who had travelled fourteen years and upwards: the nomination being made by those who were of equal standing in the ministry. Mr. M'Owan valued his election the more, on account of his nomination having been accompanied with some high commendations of his diligent labours by Dr. Bunting.

At this Conference, also, some important cases of discipline were determined. A few restless and unruly ministers had for several years assailed the character of some of the most worthy and highly esteemed of their brethren; and also attacked the administration of the affairs of the Connexion in general.

This was done in a series of publications which bore no name of writer, printer, or publisher. It was endured for some time; but silence was construed by the accusers into conscious guilt. Means were then taken to check and repress the evil; but in vain. The reputed authors were now called to account, but they set all rule and authority at defiance; and obstinately rejected all endeavours of their brethren to bring them to a better mind. They were, of course, excluded from the ministry.

Concerning these proceedings in the Conference our brother writes to his family as follows:—

“THE whole scene has been awfully impressive and deeply instructive. May the great Head of the Church keep His servants from falling, and so prevent the repetition of future acts of excision! The forbearance, fidelity, and unanimity manifested by the Conference throughout the whole of these painful discussions, and in coming to these distressing, but righteous conclusions, have been truly sublime. In every turn of the affairs to which I allude, we have seen the overruling wisdom and power of the grace and providence of God. Prayer has been offered up by many faithful

hearts, and God has heard and answered. We shall have disturbances in various places ; but we have done everything to secure peace and unity short of sacrificing our principles and independence to please and flatter a few factious and headstrong men. I am happy to be able to state at this late period of our Conference business, that there has not been an unholy temper manifested, nor an unkind sentence uttered, by any of the brethren who have taken part in these disciplinary matters. Indeed, I never was present at a Conference where devotion, love, and unity prevailed to the same extent. Party spirit seems to be extinct. We are, so far as I can judge, of one heart and mind. Dr. Bunting is, perhaps, more than ever enthroned in the esteem and affection of the ministers present. His moderation has been most marked : his wisdom in counsel unrivalled : and the kindness of his spirit has been felt by the whole assembly.

“We expected good and great things from our President, Thomas Jackson ; but all our expectations have been surpassed. He has spoken like an oracle. The godliness of his address has been unvarying, deep-toned, fervid, and sometimes impassioned. In pronouncing judgment on points of law, he has never appeared at a loss, and has in every instance been correct. While kindness has characterized his whole deportment, and imbued all his addresses, he has been firm, perhaps I might say, inflexible, in adhering to principles, and in asserting the independence and supremacy of law.”

“The conspiracy” had been deeply and extensively laid, and the “disturbances” which my brother anticipated quickly arose, and spread like a mania through the Methodist Connexion. The cause of the expelled was espoused by parties who had no personal or local cause of complaint whatever, and to whom Methodism had done nothing but good. Nothing less, however, than a complete revolution in the system was demanded.

Ministers, whom the same parties had long loved and honoured, all of a sudden were hated, reviled, and regarded as their enemies; and, to accomplish their ends, measures were adopted for cutting off all support from them and their families, as well as from the Foreign Missions and all the other Connexional funds.

The evil done was immense. Some circuits were almost broken up; and after a year of this work of destruction, the peace-loving Peter M'Owan, having completed the term of his residence and labours in Liverpool, was appointed by the Conference of 1850, as chief pastor, to one of the most distracted circuits in the Connexion; viz., London Third, or Spitalfields.

The circumstances connected with this appointment, and the spirit in which he accepted it, appear in a letter from Conference to Mrs. M'Owan.

"SUCH a circuit is not to be chosen. Indeed, nothing but the appointment and authority of Conference could induce me to submit. I have not yet fallen under the fear of the trial, and am thankful for the exemption. Were I to remonstrate, I could probably succeed; but I am not my own, and dare not set myself in opposition to the almost unanimous judgment of my brethren. I feel myself a mere child in the prospect of such labour and trial as the appointment involves, but 'our sufficiency is of God,' and He can perfect His strength *in weakness*. Should the appointment stand, this must be my consolation and hope. Besides, I am not a little impressed with the very general desire which exists among the friends of Methodism in the circuit, that I should be appointed. Most of those who filled office when we were among them before are dead, but their children are alive; and they have a traditional feeling among them, that as the blessing of the Lord attended my ministry then,

so it will be again. This may be of God : and on all these accounts, I have not dared to take on myself the responsibility of resisting so many intimations of providential direction."

" LONDON, *August 20th*, 1850.

"WE have reached the last day of our Conference, which has been remarkable on several accounts. We met with some fears lest it might turn out that disunion had entered the ranks of the ministry. These have been entirely dissipated, and the concord of the brethren is more cordial and general than perhaps it ever was before. Our President" (the late Dr. Beecham) "has performed his duties with singular wisdom, firmness, and promptitude, and all his decisions have been delivered in language at once conciliatory, clear, and conclusive. Dr. Bunting has displayed amazing energy and perseverance during the sessions of the Conference. He has been present at all its sittings. He has repeatedly stood for hours together while the Stations have been under consideration, suggesting expedients to meet difficult cases, resisting capricious alterations, and harmonizing clashing claims and rival interests. On these occasions, especially, he has appeared 'more excellent than his brethren.' His bright eye, his benignant and unembarrassed countenance, his acquaintance with the requirements of circuits and the capabilities of ministers,—his keen, but quiet wit, flashing out when least expected, and never failing to reach its object and accomplish its design,—have reminded us of former years, when his capacious and vigorous mind was allied with an iron constitution and an overpowering eloquence, rendering him a host in himself 'for counsel or for fight.' Other men in the Conference are great on isolated occasions, and on a few subjects; but Dr. Bunting is uniformly great—great without effort; and well informed on all subjects. While other men fill, and fill well, a single sphere in Methodism, Dr. Bunting's influence is felt, beneficially, through every branch and institution of our entire

economy. The preservation of his life and mental powers, under the pressure of numerous official duties, and of accumulated and unmerited reproach, is at once a matter of astonishment and a ground of gratitude. Did we not know the sufficiency of God, and the love which the great Head of the Church bears to His mystical body, we might well tremble at the idea of his being called home; and it is certainly our duty to pray that the Lord and Giver of life would spare him for many years, to bring us into circumstances of peace and established order."

CHAPTER TWELFTH.

SPITALFIELDS.

THIS was by far the most trying and painful period of Mr. M'Owan's ministerial life, as well as most uncongenial to his feelings. But we have seen that he was not the man to shun the post of duty in the hour of difficulty or of danger. We would willingly pass over these troublous scenes; but as they formed an important part of that terrible war which, among all its other evils, in a considerable degree neutralized for several years the pulpit power of the most useful ministry in the kingdom, and occasioned the loss of many thousands of ill-informed and misled souls from the fold of the Church;—justice to the memory of the minister, and to the cause of his Master, requires that in this memoir some record should be made of the difficulties with which he had to contend. Yet, in referring to these disorders, to their dire effects, and the fearful responsibilities of those who took the lead in them, we refrain from all personalities, and pray that such contentions may never again afflict any branch of the Church of Christ; but that all who bear His name may rather delight in promoting its concord and unity, till the whole world be blessed with His reign of peace and love.

As in all, other matters of importance, so in these troubles, it afforded Mr. M'Owan relief to unbosom his mind to his brother, and to share in his sympathy. Only

a brief extract, however, from his copious correspondence at this time is given, and this without dates, so as to form, in his own language, a connected statement of the leading particulars.

“ON my arrival in this distracted circuit, I got at once so buried in its affairs, that I felt as if I could think of nothing but the pressing claims and scenes by which I was surrounded.

“We have the chief men of the movement living within our borders. They appear to have resolved on annihilating our circuit. *Their* circuit they call ‘the Third London Circuit,’ and *their* preachers’ plan is called ‘the plan of the Third London Circuit.’ They have reprinted our Society tickets, simply altering the alphabetical letter C to B. On the first Sunday of the year they renewed the covenant, and administered the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, in all their places of worship. They try to treat us, in fact, as the Pope affects to treat the Churches in this country—as if we had no existence. The activity, malice, and lying misrepresentations of the party here exceed all belief. Every partisan is an apostle in zeal; and their plan is to set upon individuals, till by flattery, offers of official honour, or threatenings, they gain their man, or are beaten off with shame. Their success, it must be admitted, is great. My coming was a great vexation to them; and they have done their utmost to damage me in the eyes of the public and in the estimation of our own people. Every movement on our part is watched, and, I may truly say, everything is misrepresented. By a continued series of attacks upon ministers, official men, private members, schools, trust funds, tract societies, and our great missionary cause, they labour incessantly to accomplish the destruction of our circuit.

“But though our loss has been severe, we still exist, and hope to prosper. Our friends are undismayed; and by their liberality, which has astonished

us, the circuit is preserved from financial embarrassment. Our enemies admit that the 'starvation plan' is a failure, and that they have no hope to bring us to terms by that means."

This was the state of affairs, when he wrote a few months after he entered on this scene of trial. The renewal of the Society tickets was the beginning of painful duty. For these zealous "Reformers" claimed the token of membership from the ministers they were trying to starve, and whose ministrations they generally had abandoned.

He proceeds :—

"When I came into the circuit, one of my colleagues, and many of our best and influential friends, pressed me to enter at once on the work of *purgation* which had been begun before I arrived. Certainly there were ample and just reasons for such a course. But I claimed the exercise of their candour and confidence, while I intimated my purpose to continue the membership of all who did not wantonly and outrageously vilify the ministry and condemn Methodism while we met the classes. Without undoing what had been done, I requested their consent that the misled might have three months for consideration and prayer, and for the enjoyment of our ministry, so far as they might choose to attend. The visitation of the classes was conducted on this principle; and the dissentient leaders, with their members, were informed that we had chosen to waive all remarks on their withholding their usual contributions for the present, in hope that, on reflection, and especially by referring to the teachings of Holy Scripture on the duty of the people to their ministers, they would be brought to a better mind. By this moderation, the leaders in the revolt were greatly disconcerted, their predictions were falsified, and not a few who had committed themselves

retraced their steps; while the incorrigible were made their own judges, and warned of what they had to expect. I am fully satisfied that this was a judicious course; and I greatly admire the cordiality with which my brethren, who had been in the front of the battle before I came, aided me in carrying it out.

“When the December visitation came on, we visited the refractory leaders in private, to ascertain their views and renew our proposals. We succeeded with a few. Most were obstinate; and generally our proposals were rejected with scorn. We then told them that certain charges, which we duly explained, should be preferred against them at the leaders’-meeting. Some at once resigned. Others did not attend, and they were dropped. The charges being proved against those who did attend, I informed them that, as the end of our discipline was to save and not to destroy, their membership should be spared, if otherwise they kept our rules, but that they must cease to hold office among us. Those of their members who remained loyal were of course drafted into other classes.

“The local preachers who had given themselves to the agitation we also visited in private, and treated them in a similar manner; and they all, with one accord, on one ground or another, threw up their plans, and so saved us all further trouble.”

After noticing some serious chapel and Sunday-school difficulties, and the loss in numbers which the circuit had sustained during twelve months, including the five months previous to his coming to it, he adds:—

“When I survey the scenes of the last seven months, and look at the present position and future prospects of Methodism in this devoted circuit, I am filled with grateful amazement, and cry, ‘What hath God wrought!’ I have felt throughout the trial like a child wrestling with a giant; and yet, somehow, in

every struggle, the man of might fell under me. The mountain has crossed my path, and I was made to feel that I could neither scale its rugged summit, nor cut a passage through its rocky sides ; yet, in the time of need, and in answer to self-renouncing prayer, it was reduced to a plain. Indeed, the power, the wisdom, and the grace of God, have been signally seen in restraining and overruling the wrath of the enemy, as well as in guiding and strengthening myself, my brethren, and our faithful people. Our friends have kindly reposed confidence in me, and they, and my colleagues, have promptly aided me in carrying out the plan of operations which was laid down."

Some have supposed that these occasional outbreaks in Methodism are indications of something essentially faulty in its constitution. But this is a mistake. Its Connexional character, it is true, renders it liable to the *spread* of disaffection ; and so also the extent to which it confers office and influence upon its laity ; for no Church equals it in this respect. Yet these, viewed in another aspect, form its strength, and furnish unequalled facilities for doing extensive good at home and abroad ; so that the evil is far more than counterbalanced by the good. Every Church that is careful to maintain purity of doctrine and discipline finds that troubles arise from those who cannot endure restraint. The very excellence of Church order rouses the enmity of the restless and unruly, and leads to all manner of disorder. (Rom. vii. 8.) Even the Church in the wilderness, with its direct theocracy and visible cloud of the Divine presence, entirely dependent also on the daily miracle of manna, was not secure against agitation. Then men arose, chiefs of the people too, against their heaven-inspired leaders, and said, "Ye take too much upon you," etc. ; (Num. xvi. 3 ;)—the very

charge, in substance, that was brought against the fathers of the Wesleyan ministry.

In the Christian Church of Jerusalem, also, though under the direct pastorate of apostles, much dissension and disputation arose. (Acts xv.) And Paul, inspired by the Holy Ghost, had to warn the Ephesian presbyters, or bishops, (both titles being given to the same individuals,) that grievous wolves would enter in among them, not sparing the flock, and that of their own selves should men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. (Acts xx.) In the Church of Corinth, too, and in the Churches of Galatia, he had to mourn over divisions and defections from the faith, caused by "men of corrupt minds," who, to accomplish their ends, endeavoured to destroy his character as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

Now Methodism, which makes no claim to infallibility or perfection in its ecclesiastical constitution, has not been called to endure trials greater than these. It has been raised up in a remarkable manner by the grace and providence of God, and has taken its form not from any pre-conceived plan in the minds of its founders or leaders, for these had no object in view but the conversion of sinners and the spread of Scriptural holiness by the faithful preaching of the Gospel; but has become a branch of the Christian Church rather from the circumstances of its own development, and from the bigotry and opposition of those who ought to have fostered it. And formed thus by the overruling and guiding hand of the great Head of the Church, it has been preserved and led through all its trials. Like Moses' bush, it has flourished in the fire. To a vast extent it has spread the converting power of the Gospel through this and many other lands, both civilized and savage. Wherever it goes it breathes nothing but

peace and goodwill to all; and there is every probability that it will march on, till Christ has subdued all to Himself, and filled with righteousness, truth, and peace, the world which He has redeemed with His blood.

What immediately follows will also show that in addition to the unequalled constitutional power and influence which Methodism confers upon its laity, on extraordinary occasions, special means are adopted to ascertain the mind of its people, in order to act according to their wishes, as far as the case may require, and so as not to unsettle the essential principles of the body.

On July 16th, 1851, my brother attended a large meeting of ministers and members of the Connexion, who, at the request of the President, Dr. Beecham, met in Manchester, "in order to afford him the information which he had solicited as to the general views and feelings of the members of Society on the subject of the late agitation, and on the general state of the Connexion."

From this meeting my brother wrote to his wife:—

" July 19th, 1851.

" ON Wednesday there must have been four hundred ministers and laymen present, the latter greatly outnumbering the former. After the devotional exercises the President delivered a luminous and pre-eminently judicious address, which included a brief epitome of our history, and an elaborate exposition of our polity, in which he distinguished between the great principles which we must maintain at all hazards, and the minor arrangements which admit of adaptation to existing circumstances and exigencies. The general and hearty cheers which his faithful enunciation of principle elicited were sufficient to assure the most timid that a large majority of those present were right-minded on

all essential points. But the benefit of the admirable address was diminished by the tact of a number of men,—sympathizers with the agitating party,—who either by concert or by instinctive combativeness, rose up one after another, and poured forth a long series of lamentations, insinuations, threatenings, doubts, fears, ominous predictions, and proposed innovations and changes. This brought a temporary gloom over the meeting, and some of us began to fear that a plan was laid to consume our time and distract our counsels, which it might be difficult to frustrate without awakening feelings which it was desirable should not be excited either in friends or foes. On meeting in the afternoon, our dear friend Mr. Pearce, of Poplar, delivered a fervent and right-principled speech, which went a considerable way to restore the gracious feeling which the President's address had left on our minds. From this time, everything proceeded in an even, happy course. There were indeed some foolish speeches made, and some wild schemes of legislation propounded, but they were listened to in silence, and may be said to have died with the voice that uttered them. The great majority of the addresses delivered were loyal in their sentiments, kind in their spirit, courteous in their manner of delivery, and some of them were truly eloquent in their diction. Even those who spoke on the side of innovation professed a high regard for our essential principles both in doctrine and discipline, though some of their proposals were inconsistent with their professions; but in none, even of these, was there any departure from courtesy and duly regulated feeling.

“On Wednesday we sat from three o'clock till half past nine, and after the ministers retired, the laymen, at the request of Mr. Farmer, met by themselves, and agreed to a series of resolutions, embodying their deliberate condemnation of the agitation; their fixed attachment to the essential principles of Methodism, and their determination to uphold them; their sympathy with the ministers in their recent sufferings; and their confidence in the wisdom and integrity of the Confer-

ence; and in reference to the proposed modifications of our minor disciplinary arrangements, they leave them to the consideration of the Conference, in assurance that while that body will preserve the vital principles of our discipline in their integrity, they will gladly avail themselves of any real improvement which the experience of the past may serve to point out and recommend. These Resolutions were passed unanimously. About eighty names were appended to them forthwith, and pains will be taken to secure the signature of the gentlemen who had left Manchester before they were passed.*

"The President had to leave for the Conference at Newcastle before the meeting closed on Thursday. His concluding speech was very affecting, and was a noble sequel to his very able discharge of the duties of chairman. At his request, Dr. Bunting occupied the chair. This was a happy and providential incident in the proceedings. The loyal character of the meeting had been fully shown, and the remaining speeches were more like lovefeast statements than addresses on ecclesiastical polity. The sympathizers with the agitation had nearly all left, and we had really a rich treat of Christian and Methodist feeling and sentiment. Dr. Bunting, in his happiest manner, took a review of his personal history and conduct in relation to Methodism, since his appointment as sub-secretary to the Conference in 1806.

"On the evening of Thursday, about eight o'clock, there was a general call for Dr. Bunting to deliver his sentiments. The Doctor was poorly, and his voice was very feeble, but he complied: and while he gave

* The Resolutions were circulated throughout the Connexion, and before the Conference concluded, August 16th, they received in all the signatures of upwards of six hundred gentlemen, who, for personal piety and general intelligence, especially in Church matters, were not inferior to an equal number of laymen in any other branch of the Church in the kingdom. Their Declaration, with the signatures, and the Resolutions of Conference thereon, will be found in "Minutes of Conference," vol. xi., pp. 682, 720.

expression to his wise sentiments, embodying caution, encouragement, hope, affection, devotedness to the cause and interests of Methodism, a scene occurred which was worthy of artistic commemoration. The shadows of evening were gathering, the silence of death reigned, the scattered members of the meeting drew near, most present stood up, and, bending forward, they looked and listened to the sage-like sayings of the venerable man, as if each prized his counsels as a legacy, and was ready to say, 'We shall not look upon his like again.' It was indeed a privileged season."

The solemnity of this scene was, however, but an anticipation of what is related in the next letter.

"NEWCASTLE, *July 29th*, 1851.

"MY DEAR I——.

"THE Missionary Committee of Review met this morning. Dr. Newton offered up a powerful prayer. The great incident of the day was Dr. Bunting's retirement from the secretaryship. The testimonies delivered by one and another, illustrative of his talents, services, sufferings, and claims, and also expressive of their admiration, affection, and sorrow, were perfectly overwhelming. After the resolution was passed, by all present *standing up*, a solemn silence ensued. He arose. As one man the large committee again started to their feet, and remained standing all the time of his address, which lasted nearly half an hour. He began by offering up a prayer for mercy and for aid; accompanied by a solemn thanksgiving for the service he had been enabled to render to the great missionary cause. He then addressed the assembly in a tremulous voice, which was, at times, almost inaudible through deep emotion. He alluded to his early life, his friendship and fellowship with Dr. Newton, (who had seconded the resolution,) his love of Methodism, which, he said, was only less than *that* he owed to Christ,—his undying attachment to the missionary cause,—his warm affec-

tion for the preachers,—his gratitude to God that he retired from public life with an unblemished character, with the esteem of his brethren, and a bright prospect of meeting the friends and patrons of the missionary cause who had gone to their rest. He alluded to the reproaches and slanders which had been heaped upon him, in terms expressive of pity for those who were their authors,—of his thankfulness that they were unmerited,—and that they were repudiated by all who knew him, or who had an opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the facts of the case. His references to his colleagues in office, the harmony with which he and they had laboured together,—the high esteem in which he held their talents and labours,—his sympathy for them under their respective trials,—and his perfect confidence in their integrity and entire devotedness to the Society's interests. These were some of the topics on which he dwelt; but to give an adequate idea of the address itself is utterly impossible. It was so holy, so humble, so full of love and of great thoughts, that it appeared to be the whisperings of a spirit ripe for heaven, and standing on its verge.

“No scene has occurred in Methodism so touching and so sublime since the first Conference after the death of Wesley. At times we were all melted into tears, and at other times the sentiments delivered elicited the most rapturous cheers.

“Altogether, it has been a wonderful day: a day never to be forgotten in the history of the Connexion. We were all broken down: and we regard the manifestation, as indicating a greatly improved state of feeling, and as a good omen of the coming Conference.

“Give my love to my colleagues: accept special love to yourself and the children.”

“NEWCASTLE, *August 9th.*

“THE devotional services of the Conference have been hallowed and hallowing. They have been characterized by humble confession, lowly abasement, deep concern for the glory of God, and earnest prayer for the peace

of our Zion and the entire sanctification of our ministry and Societies.

“Some of the obituary notices of our deceased ministers are beautiful epitomes of Christian character; and they exhibit the triumph of faith in its simplicity and sublimity,—in its holy joy, calm confidence, and jubilant hope. They have been listened to by the Conference with an unwonted degree of solemn sadness; and the spirit in which they have been commented upon has been very kind, candid, and brotherly. How soon others will have to perform this last duty to our memory God only knows; for many of us feel that

‘We are to the margin come,
And we expect to die.’

May we not only be saved from whatever would cause our brethren and fathers to blush on our account, but be enabled to serve our generation, and fulfil the duties of our ministry; that when dead we may yet speak! How insignificant are all merely personal and adventitious circumstances when viewed in the light of eternity! And how weighty, enduring, and edifying are the great essentials of genuine piety and true ministerial fidelity!

“From the statements made during the reading of these sketches, there can be no doubt but that several valuable lives have been shortened, if not destroyed, by the spirit of malignant misrepresentation and turbulent agitation which has afflicted our Connexion during the last two years.”

“August 11th.

“I PREACHED three times yesterday to a simple, fervent people at Shildon, in the Bishop-Auckland Circuit. The village, the chapel, and the congregation have been, to a great extent, the creations of a good man of the name of Hawksworth. He was one of the first men in the nation who constructed a steam-engine, and also invented methods for greatly increasing its power; but, like almost all inventors, he reaped but

small advantage from his discoveries, through others turning them to their own advantage. He, however, obtained a respectable competence as manager in a large locomotive manufactory. His house was the first one built in what is now the village of Shildon, and the manufactory he commenced was the means of drawing the population to the neighbourhood. His little counting-house was the first preaching-place, and he and his family formed the first class. They have now a considerable Society, and a chapel which will hold about three hundred and fifty people. He died about a year ago, leaving an aged widow and a truly Christian family. His children are the main supporters of Methodism, and his memory is cherished and revered by the whole population. The congregation was composed chiefly of miners and mechanics, and their dress and demeanour in the house of God were strongly indicative of domestic comfort and good morals. If early attendance, close attention to the word preached, with fervent and accurate singing, are signs of piety, they were not wanting. Nearly all the congregation kneeled in prayer. I was greatly pleased with their simplicity, and though my voice was bad, I had a happy day among them."

Extracts of letters to his son.

"February, 1850.

"As Christians it is our duty to think on, and do, the things which are lovely and of good report, as well as those which are demanded by the stern dictates of honesty and justice. The path of duty never crosses the rule of equity. Let us always act on the command of our Lord: 'As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.'

"For myself I have ever been preserved from having to force my way through life, and from all measures calculated to impinge on the dictates of a good conscience. By waiting on God in prayer, resigning myself up to His will in well-doing, and by availing myself, as opportunity offered, of the counsel of the

wise and good, I have, in most of the leading events of my life been led in a plain, open path. The Divine counsel is, 'Delight thyself in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart;' and, 'Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.' The whole course of my life justifies the truth and faithfulness of this promise."

To the same.

"November 13th, 1850.

"EXEMPTION from trial is not indeed to be anticipated; but support under trial, and deliverance from it, may be confidently calculated upon, if we make the Most High our Refuge. A clear sense of our acceptance in the Beloved, and an habitual reliance on the Holy Spirit for His promised aid, will make you, to a great extent, independent of circumstances. The frowns of men cannot greatly distress him who walks in the light of God's countenance; and an abridgment of earthly comforts can well be borne by Him to whom Christ is precious, and for whom the crown of glory is preparing. The approval of God, and the approbation of our own conscience, will sweeten the bitterest cup, and give softness to the hardest pillow. Your course hitherto has been comparatively smooth, and it has rejoiced my heart to find, that when any trial besets your path, you not only set yourself to overcome, but endeavour to learn lessons of instruction from it. Nothing that befalls us is in itself an absolute evil; and some of our greatest blessings spring from events and circumstances which we, in our haste, regarded as calamitous. The whetstone wears away while it sharpens; and though it be abasing to see our own ignorance, and to feel our weakness and nothingness, yet the profit we reap from such discoveries and humiliations is immense. 'All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.'

"We are glad to hear that you have been striving to improve your acquaintance with the higher classics,

and also pursuing other studies in your leisure hours. Our country is crowded with men of medium abilities, and youth is the time to rise above mediocrity. Not that we may hope to reach eminence during youth, or even in early manhood, but if a solid foundation be then laid, and due diligence be used in acquiring such information as is within our reach, we shall be prepared to seize, and improve to our own honour and the benefit of society, subsequent opportunities and openings as they occur. Wesley's advice respecting money applies also to knowledge,—human and Divine: 'Get all you can; save all you can; and give all you can.'

"We never forget you at the throne of grace, and trust our prayers are answered in your behalf. I trust the trials of our new sphere of labour" (London Third) "have been sanctified to us all,—at least we *pray* more."

In the spring of 1852 he went again to Cornwall on Missionary Deputation work, and wrote home from

St. Mawes, April 24th.—"I know not whether I ought to apologize most for the worthless character of my last letter, or for my long delay in sending you another. The truth is, I wrote *that* in the midst of company, and on the eve of a journey, and since then I have not had an hour to myself from morning to night. Each day we have had a meeting, and sometimes a sermon also. To-day they say I am to rest, only they gave me a hint in public last night, that a sermon would be esteemed a favour in place of the prayer-meeting, which is fixed for the evening.

"The services at Truro were of an interesting and highly improving character. Tuesday we rode to Gwennap. Mr. Thornton, who had failed to secure a place in the coach to Plymouth, kindly preached for me in the afternoon, which was a relief. The attendance at the sermon, and especially at the meeting, was large, and the people seemed to take a deep interest in the proceedings.

"Wednesday, we rode to Tuckingmill. The congre-

gation was small for Cornwall. The meeting in the evening was interesting, but not crowded. The demon of '*agitation*' has done his evil work here also; and though only a small number have seceded, the spirit of fervent piety has suffered a severe blight.

"Thursday morning we visited the manufactory of the '*mining fuse*;' an invention which is said to be only second in its adaptation to preserve life to Davy's safety lamp. Afterwards we rode on to Falmouth. In the afternoon Mr. Parkes preached a sound, practical sermon. The rain poured down in torrents, to the obvious diminution of our congregation in the evening. We, however, had a good meeting. Friday morning was a bright, mild April day, with the wind from the south. It was truly balmy, and I had a pleasant walk before breakfast.

"Falmouth is finely situated on the side of a hill. In the front of the town, the noble and capacious '*roads*' stretch away to the sea on the right, and from the mouth of the river on the left. The south side of the town has a fine bay facing it, which is seldom without ships of various burden. After breakfast we visited the castle, which commands the roads and the entrance to the harbour. The site of the castle is excellent, and the fortifications are said to be capable of being made most formidable in case of attack. On the adjacent rocks, which are washed by the sea, I found samphire in bloom, and in the pools of water left in the hollows of the rocks we saw a number of zoophytes; but only a few of them exhibited their beautiful colours, and these only partially.

"On Friday, we crossed to St. Mawes, a small fishing town, on the face of a steep and rather picturesque hill. A number of our Falmouth friends accompanied us. The sea was calm, and the sail was consequently pleasant to fresh-water sailors like myself. As there was no afternoon service here, we sailed across the bay to St. Anthony's, a small parish, with a very ancient church. Ascending a hill, we had a magnificent view. The headlands of the coast

spread out in different directions, so as to give the sea the appearance of six distinct lakes. The day being fine, this was a very pleasant ramble, and not very fatiguing. In the evening we held our meeting in a rustic chapel, the attendance was very good, the singing excellent, and the whole service satisfactory. Our Falmouth friends returned in a boat, under a bright starlight sky. They sang one of our hymns as they moved out of the bay, and, amid the stillness of the scene by sea and land, the effect was hallowing. The window of the room in which I slept looked out on the bay; and the house being only a few yards above high-water mark, I heard the gentle murmur of the waves both when I lay down and when I awoke.

“This is called my day of rest. In the evening we hold a prayer-meeting, at which I am advertized to give an address. To-morrow, the forenoon sermon falls to my lot; and in the afternoon I proceed to St. Austell, to preach in the evening. I am happy to say, that the character of all our meetings hitherto has been solemn, earnest, and improving. They have left, I doubt not, a good savour in the minds of the people.

“May the Keeper of Israel be the defence and portion of yourself and our dear children!”

From the conference at Sheffield, in 1852, he writes home :—

“YESTERDAY was a good day. I had the happiness of hearing Dr. Newton in the evening. The text was, ‘I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ,’ etc. ; an old and famous subject of his. It was, indeed, a beautiful, powerful, varied, and instructive exposition of the glorious Gospel, and it was delivered with great energy, and even with youthful ardour. He has fully made up his mind to retire from the itinerancy. He told us to-day that on his seventieth birthday he preached twice, and walked a considerable distance, so as utterly to exhaust himself, and from that day’s exertions he had

never fully recovered.....The congregation I had to address on the Sabbath was large, and though my work was sadly defective, I hope some of the people felt that the great Master of assemblies was present.

"The special services held in the same chapel in 1835 are still remembered, and it appears that several persons got good under one or other of the two sermons I preached on that occasion.

"This morning we have had a feast of fat things, full of marrow, furnished to us by the ex-President (Dr. Hannah). His text was Acts xx. 28. The subject was the pastoral office. Its origin, duties, and design was the theme. It was a word in season to the ministers, to our people, and to our enemies. Everything connected with Conference business goes on well. The President (the Rev. John Scott) usually calls upon *two* of the brethren to pray, before we enter on the work of the morning sitting, and we seem to get on all the better for our prolonged devotions."

From the Bradford Conference, August 1st, 1853, he writes to Mrs. M'Owan :—

"We had a high day in Bradford yesterday, crowded congregations, good sermons, showers of heavenly influences, bright anticipations, rapturous singing, and multitudes ready to testify, 'Lord, it is good to be here.'

"This morning Dr. Hannah preached for the ex-President the sermon to the Conference. A noble sermon ; full of Christ, and full of power. The text, 1 Cor. iii. 11. During the discourse there were many outbursts of feeling, both from the preachers and the people. Surely, there are good days in store for Methodism ! "

August 2nd.—Referring to his work on the Sunday. "The congregation was very large : about three thousand ; and a goodly number of my brethren have thanked me for the discourse ; some of them stating it had been made a blessing to their souls. In prospect, it was a mountainous difficulty ; but in the performance

of the duty I obtained help, and I was delivered from 'the fear of man,' which 'bringeth a snare.' I forgot many things I meant to have said, and gave utterance to many crude thoughts I never intended; but it is in this way the great Master humbles His servants while He performs His own work. I thought of you, my dear Jane, before I entered the pulpit, and was sure I had your prayers and loving solicitude.

"I left home for this Conference with a new class of feelings, owing to our dear Jeanie's changed circumstances. I sympathize with you all, and wish I could rejoice. I could make myself very unhappy, but must not. We are not our own; our child is the Lord's, as well as we. I admire her fortitude, and will not cease to pray that the grace of the Redeemer may be sufficient for her and you, and that His strength may be made perfect in behalf of us all. We need to walk by faith."

CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

BIRMINGHAM.

JUST after the Bradford Conference he removed to Birmingham ; and towards the close of the year the anticipated change in his family, just referred to, took place, in the marriage of his youngest daughter to the Rev. William Wilson (D), who was then appointed as a missionary to Fiji. The following letters evince the spirit in which the parents gave up their child to the Lord's service in those savage islands. They will also harmonize with the feelings of many Christian parents whose loved ones are engaged in spreading the knowledge of the Lord in the dark places of the earth ; and they may serve to awaken sympathy and prayer in those at home, for such devoted labourers : as well as enlarged liberality towards the conversion of the world to God.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson had soon to bid farewell to their native land. On embarking at Gravesend they wrote to the home they had left—left for ever by the daughter. But as a proof of his undying love, the father wrote a letter that might reach them at Plymouth, as follows :—

“ BIRMINGHAM, *November 5th, 1853.*

“ MY DEAR JANE,

“ WE have felt very lonely since your departure. Your sweet letters, which assured us of your welfare,

and of your firm trust in God our Father, have comforted us much ; and we doubt not that the events of each day will demonstrate that you and your dear husband are clearly in the path of duty, and that you do not rely in vain in your Almighty Lord for unerring guidance and sure defence.

“ In consenting to your marriage, with the prospect of your speedy removal to such a distant sphere of labour, we felt we were laying you on the *altar*, but then, we knew that that altar was His, ‘ to whom our more than all is due.’

“ We are comforted with the consideration, that distant as your destination is, it is as fully within the precincts of Providence, as is the most favoured spot of creation ; and as you go to that far distant land in obedience to the call of Him in whom ‘ we live, and move, and have our being,’ your lives are much more likely to be preserved than if you were to remain at home in opposition to His will, and in contradiction to your sense of duty.

“ In losing you, we feel that we are parting with a treasure, the full value of which years of happy possession have been scarcely sufficient to enable us to estimate. May we have grace to learn the deeper lesson which years of deprivation are about to teach us !

“ Hitherto, I hope, I have been preserved from saying a word tending to deter either you or your dear husband from the sacrificial course you have both chosen, and I mean not to begin now. On the contrary I would say, Arm yourselves continually with ‘ the mind which was in Christ.’ Believe that the whole world has been redeemed ; place a confiding trust in God : be calm, be prayerful, and set the Lord always before you. Your mission is to save souls, and to succeed you must live in the possession of a present and full salvation.

“ I am about to set off for Wolverhampton, where I spend to-morrow and Monday in aid of missions : and conclude with earnest love to yourself and Mr. Wilson, in which your mother joins in her own measure.”

A letter from her mother, of the same date, shows how willingly she also devoted her daughter to the missionary work.

“MY BELOVED JEANIE,

“I FEEL I must write, were it only for the pleasure of thinking that your eyes would read, and your fingers touch, the paper which has passed through mine.

“Your image will be ever present to me, with that stamp of calm and holy confidence which enabled you to separate yourself from so many of your life's treasures for the sake of Him who loved you, and gave Himself for you. More than ever do I feel assured that the same Divine Spirit who so strengthened you in the parting scene, is given to you as your Comforter, to ‘abide with you for ever.’

“You have always been very dear, but now every passing hour makes me sensible how much we have lost. I do not murmur. I would not take back the gift, if I could, costly as it is, which has been laid upon the missionary altar. The same high and Christian principle which has nerved you to leave friends and country for Christ's sake, will enable you throughout life to meet every trial and difficulty which may lie in your path.

“Great as my loss is, I rejoice that I am blessed with such a noble-minded daughter. Your God, and your father's God, will at all times be your strong tower, and ‘a very present help in trouble.’ He will deliver you and be your ‘shield and buckler.’ The Book of God is full of promises suitable for you and your dear husband, and the Saviour has said, that those who have ‘forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother,...or lands, for My name's sake, and the Gospel's, shall receive a hundred-fold, now in this time,...and in the world to come eternal life.’

“That the God of all consolation may be your portion, day and night, is the constant prayer of your affectionate mamma.”

From Mr. M'Owan to the Rev. W. Wilson.

“BIRMINGHAM, *December 20th, 1853.*

“MY DEAR MR. WILSON,

“As the others are writing to your dear Jane, it is but fair that I should address a few lines to you. I need not say what a blank your departure left in our domestic circle, and how painfully we have felt your absence, nor how sincerely we sympathize with you under your trials and privations. Neither need I assure you that though every day is increasing the distance between us, yet you and yours are ever with us—in our hearts to live and die with us. In the visions of the night I oft visit you, and hold intercourse with you and your fellow-passengers.

“The great sources of our consolation in our solitude have been the recognition of Christian principle, the throne of grace, and the assurance that you are in the safe keeping, and in the sacred employ, of the Lord Jesus, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of hosts. The omnipresence of God, the universality of Divine Providence, and the unchanging love of the Redeemer, have been to us chambers of safety, in which we have hid ourselves from the approaches of anxious care and darkening unbelief. We have felt the throne of grace to be more attractive, and more highly esteemed than ever, because there especially we could commune with you and yours, in the presence of our Father and your Father, of our God and your God, asking on your behalf, all that love could dictate, or infinite benevolence bestow. We have prayed with some degree of confidence, that from the crest of every threatening billow you might hear a voice saying, ‘It is I; be not afraid.’ That when bending under a sense of your utter insufficiency for the great work in which you have embarked, your Saviour might apply the promise, coupled with the commission, ‘Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world;’ Amen: and so make His truth and love your defence, that you

shall not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day.

“As you may suppose, the collisions your ship encountered in the Downs awakened our sympathy, and stimulated our intercessions on your behalf; and when we heard that no fewer than twenty ships foundered or ran ashore during the same fogs, some of them sinking with all on board, we felt unutterably grateful that the ‘Angel of the Lord’ had stood by you, and that not a hair of your heads had perished.

“A short time ago I received a letter from an old man who spent many years in the army, and who, besides his pension, receives a salary as a clerk. He expressed his gratitude to God for keeping him, through the instrumentality of Methodism, with his face towards Zion, and stated that he felt it his duty to do something for the work of God in this its time of need. He said he wished to devote £50 to the erection of a chapel in our circuit, if such an undertaking could be effected soon; but if this was impracticable he would probably devote the sum to the foreign missions. I have conversed with the veteran, and after reconsidering the whole case, he has made up his mind to give £25 to the missions, and £25 to Bristol Road chapel, on the understanding, that as soon as possible the case of Summerhill be taken up, and something done to provide for the poor people there a suitable place to worship in.

“Give a father’s love to your dear Jane, and accept the same yourself.”

March 2nd, 1854.—“Dear Mr. and Mrs Wilson, often and earnestly we have looked for some announcement that the good ship “Artemisia” had been either seen or spoken with on her outward-bound passage; but hitherto we have looked in vain. To us, this has been a matter of disappointment. Though we have not allowed it to awaken painful apprehensions, it has given us such an idea of your isolated circumstances, and of the vastness of the wilderness of waters which

you have to traverse, as we never before possessed. We have thought that had we been confined to our house since you left—even with the opportunity of visiting our next door neighbours, and of seeing our beautiful lawn, with its green shrubs, the trees, with the little birds perching on their leafless branches, and the street, with its moving panorama of people passing, children playing, and carriages driving—we should have felt it to be an almost intolerable restraint: and if so, what must it be, to be confined to the crowded deck of a small ship by day, and your narrow cabin by night. These ruminations, as you may conceive, were far from being either pleasing or profitable, and we had to seek refuge from them by calling to our recollection the all-sufficiency of God, the fulness and variety of the great and precious promises, the sweets of Christian fellowship, the confidence which a conviction of being in the path of duty inspires, and the happiness resulting from earnest and well-meant endeavours to glorify God and do good to those around us, according to our ability and opportunities. Aided by these recollections, and by the exercise of faith and prayer in your behalf, we have managed to shut out anxious care and torturing fear, and have even indulged the hope that you will be able to tell us of happy days, peaceful nights, successful labours, brightening prospects, and abounding joys,—notwithstanding all your privations. At the throne of grace we have generally felt as if we got near to you, and you to us, and we have sometimes derived unutterable pleasure from the firm belief that the same all-seeing Eye which was fixed on us for good, was looking down on you; that the same gracious Ear into which our cry entered was open, and inclined to hear your prayer; and that the same everlasting Arms which encircled us were underneath and around you by night and by day. Though deeply conscious that we have not abounded in the duty of intercession as we might and ought to have done, yet we can say that the throne of grace, and the right of approaching it for ourselves and others,

were never more precious than since you left. We possess from day to day a sweet persuasion that our prayers are heard.

"I need not say how greatly we long to hear from you, and how glad we shall be when your communications come to hand; nor are we alone, for many eyes are looking after you, and many ears long to hear the glad intelligence that you are safe and well.

"Meanwhile, accept of a father's love, and rest assured that our prayers shall daily ascend to heaven in your behalf. Love God supremely, and seek His glory, bear one another's burdens; and study to draw each other nearer to God, and more fully under the shadow of His Throne."

September 2nd, 1854.—"My dear children, we thought the news of your safe arrival long in coming; and proved that 'hope deferred maketh the heart sick;' but in proportion to the pain of longing, such was our joy when the 'journal,' with its ample details, came to hand. We were indeed 'like them that dream.... Our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing;' for we felt that the Lord had done great things for them we loved. We felt called upon to sing a new song unto the Lord. Many participated in our joy, and warm congratulations came in from many quarters. We did not forget that you had yet to encounter the perils of the deep ere you could say you had reached your future home; and that home, we were aware, would be wanting in many comforts which we could wish you to possess; but we were comforted in the hope that He who had conducted you thus far would be with you to the end; and that He would take occasion from the lack of creature comforts to pour a larger measure of His peace, joy, and power, into your hearts.

"As a family we have been crowned with loving kindnesses and tender mercies. We have felt our domestic circle diminished; and, without being bidden, the tear has sometimes dimmed the eye while we looked on the empty chair, or the vacant sofa; but we have

endeavoured to sanctify the emotion by an act of resignation to the Divine Will, and by offering up a silent prayer in behalf of the loved ones far away. I dare not say that we have never been sad, but I can say that we have never murmured. Our delight in Birmingham is probably diminished by your departure, but our interest in the world is greatly increased. We feel as if we had a weightier and a more tender stake in its concerns, for weal or woe. To pray for the salvation of all its tribes and families is not so much a duty as a privilege now; and having laid you on the altar of its Saviour, we feel as if we had done something towards its salvation. The altar will sanctify the gift, and our prayer is, that He whose you are, and whom you serve, may long guard your lives, and bless your labours.

"The great event of the year, to us, has been the assembling of the Conference in Birmingham. In prospect, this was to me a mountain difficulty, for I clearly saw that the chief direction of the preliminary arrangements would devolve on myself. With the details I was but little acquainted. I have frequently been stationed in towns where the Conference met, but I generally contrived to secure for myself a very subordinate office. By the by, permit me to remind *you* of the old proverb, 'Practice makes perfect:' and allow me to say, that I now think it unwise in ministers or in ministers' wives to decline the honours and toils of office when fairly proffered, either on the ground of modesty or the plea of insufficiency. I should have been, in every way, a more efficient minister, if I had not on many occasions put aside the call of duty on the principle that others were better qualified. Our sufficiency is of God, and qualifications for duty are obtained in humble and prayerful attempts to perform duty.

"The preparatory committees were characterized by unity of judgment, oneness of affection, good temper, and brotherly kindness. In fact, from beginning to end, there was not an irritating word spoken, nor a bad feeling manifested. It was, certainly, the most united, happy, and improving Conference I ever attended; and

considering the great financial difficulties with which we had to grapple, this is saying much.

"We are anticipating a good year in Birmingham; and, indeed, the Connexion is looking for showers of blessing.

"Another very important event has lately taken place in Birmingham,—the celebration of the Jubilee of the Rev. John Angell James's ministry to the Carr's Lane church. Interesting services were held through a week. The great meeting was convened in the Town Hall, which was crowded from end to end. The church presented him with a splendidly bound Bible, a handsome silver vase, and a large sum of money: the latter he returned, in order that it might be devoted to the erection of a new chapel with schoolrooms, which, it is intended, shall be the Jubilee monument. Addresses were presented to the venerable man from various churches. It was my lot to present one from the Wesleyan ministers and circuit-stewards in Birmingham. It was an interesting and exciting occasion. We commend you, our beloved ones, to the Almighty guardianship of Him who neither slumbers nor sleeps. May His richest blessings attend you, and cause His work to prosper in your hands!"

As the Address presented to the Rev. J. A. James, mentioned above, was drawn up by Mr. M'OWAN, we give a copy:—

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

"WHILE the ministers and members of your own denomination throughout the land are presenting their respectful and heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of your having reached the jubilee year of your ministerial life, you will not deem it intrusive, if we, the Wesleyan ministers in Birmingham, testify the deep and joyous interest with which we also regard that glad event.

"Though belonging to a different community, we most cordially sympathize with yourself and family, together with the members of your church, on the

happy retrospect which the last fifty years present; and, knowing that the good which is done on the earth the Lord doeth it, we would express our devout gratitude to the great Head of the Church, for sparing you so long to exercise those rare gifts and varied ministerial qualifications which His Holy Spirit has sanctified to the edification and salvation of such numbers.

“Though some of us may be personally unknown to you, we have all admired the eloquence, the zeal, and the fidelity which have characterized your ministry; we have individually derived much spiritual profit from the labours of your pen; and we have pleasure in recording the fact, that many of our people are your debtors to a large amount, through the same medium.

“In an age when, in many quarters, an exclusive party spirit has frequently given an exaggerated importance to denominational differences, we have rejoiced to know that your voice has been lifted up for the frank exercise of Christian love towards all who hold fast the great principles of essential truth.

“We cannot forget, and must ever be grateful for, the valuable and kindly administered services which you have rendered to our body on many occasions, both from the pulpit and the platform; but, on this jubilant occasion, we feel called upon to glorify Christ in you, on account of the wide-spread blessings He has diffused through the Protestant churches generally by means of your powerful ministry, and especially by your numerous practical and richly evangelical publications.

“Though we, with thousands who share the gladness of this day, earnestly desire that your life may be prolonged for many years, yet the time must come when your personal labours will cease, and your living example fade from the eye of the existing Church; but it is to us, and to your friends generally, a ground of thanksgiving to God, who ‘worketh all in all,’ that as long and as far as the English language shall be

spoken, John Angell James will be known and revered as the guide of earnest seekers of salvation,—the monitor of ministers, the counsellor of Christian parents, the instructor of youthful professors, and the advocate and expounder of catholic love. This is an honour which the wealth of kings could not have purchased.

“Forgive us for having occupied so much of your attention and time, on an occasion so important and absorbing, and permit us in conclusion to assure you, that the sentiments of esteem and respect which we have so imperfectly expressed are largely shared by our brethren in the ministry and the members of our churches.

“Praying that your valuable life may be long preserved, and that your pastoral relations and domestic joys may ever be under the guard of Almighty Love,

“We remain,

“Reverend and dear Sir,

“Yours very affectionately,”

* * *

To the Rev. W. Wilson.

“December 1st, 1854.

“MY DEAR WILLIAM,

“WE were all greatly delighted and not a little edified by your welcome letter, and that of dear Jeanie. We adore the grace and providence of God in preserving both of you from disease and sudden calamity, and enabling you to possess your soul in patience, and to retain your confidence in His love, notwithstanding the dangers you had to encounter. You have begun your great enterprise nobly. Trusting in God, you have not been confounded. His strength has been made perfect in your weakness; and, while you calmly and confidently rely on His promised aid, He will comfort you on every side, and make His grace sufficient. In prosecuting your ‘up-hill’ course you will have to endure many privations; but while you seek His glory, not your own,

you will obtain strength according to your day. And by embracing and resting in the will of God, you will obtain the grace to prove that 'labour is rest, and pain is sweet,' because of the presence and power of your covenant God. Yours is a front-rank position in the militant host of Immanuel. The powers of hell, and some of the most inveterate and appalling forms of evil which exist on earth, stand ready to resist you. In such a combat natural courage and mere human wisdom are but feeble auxiliaries. Nothing short of Omnipotence can sustain you or overthrow the adversaries with which you contend. But He who has called you to the war has made ample provision both for your defence and final success. Your enemies are His enemies. His truth, His glory, His grace and love, are all pledged in your behalf, and interested in the great issue of the contest. With the whole armour of God, with the Holy Spirit guiding and comforting you, with the example of your Captain before you, and with the love of God and man filling your heart, you will not only be kept from fainting, but you will fight valiantly, and be more than conqueror through Him that loved you. Yes, He will enable you to take the prey from the mighty, to deliver them who are drawn unto death and ready to be slain, and to be the messenger of glad tidings to thousands who sit in the region and shadow of death. Never despond; the Lord reigneth, and 'all things are possible to him that believeth.'

"I am reading at present the Epistles of St. Paul, with Wesley's Notes, and I confess I never saw the glory of the Apostle's character as a Christian, and a Christian minister, as I have done while thus sitting at his feet. I have been led to admire especially his wisdom in reproofing sin and enforcing duty; his tender affection for those who were the fruits of his ministry, and his yearning pity for such as had resisted and rejected him and the Gospel he preached; his meekness under unmerited sufferings, his steadfastness in defence of the truth, and his calm fortitude in

circumstances of peril, and in the prospect of death. While I have pondered on the unearthly language he employs in exalting Christ, in magnifying the love of God, and the wisdom, love, and grace seen in the saving plan, I have been covered with shame on account of my ignorance, personal defects, and many shortcomings.

“The zeal with which you and Brother Fordham entered into the work of the mission, while at Auckland, filled me with exceeding joy. Our commission is not to the inhabitants of a certain town, or island, but to the world, and to every human being, as they may come in our way. The true minister of Christ does not sit down to consult how little he may do in the Lord’s vineyard without losing character and *status* among men, but rather how much he can do, and how he may most effectively spend and be spent in saving men and recommending Christ. Without undervaluing or being insensible to the beauties of nature, or the calm quietude of retirement, or the sweet enjoyments of home, he will ever regard them as subordinate to the glory of God and the salvation of souls. In the depths of eternity the Redeemer’s rejoicing was in ‘the habitable part of His earth,’ and ‘His delights were with the sons of men.’

“I have to request that you will give our united love to Messrs. Calvert, Malvern, and Lyth, together with your two schoolmasters, Messrs. Singer and Collis. With love to your dear Jeanie,

“I remain,” etc.

“*January 31st, 1855.*

“MY DEAR WILLIAM AND JEANIE,

“YOUR last communications filled us with devout gratitude to that gracious Providence which has brought you safely through a voyage so long and fraught with danger. ‘Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.’ You have not trusted in vain. The doctrine of an all-pervading

and infinitely wise and gracious Providence, was never so precious to us as since we gave you up to labour in the ends of the earth. The lines of the Christian's telegraph extend from all points of the compass, both on sea and land; and they are all in direct communication with the throne of Him who is our Saviour and our God. Not only can we transmit by them, and that with lightning speed, prayers and thanksgivings on behalf of those we love, but our gracious Lord has engaged to return answers involving every form and kind of blessing required. No enemy is above His control, no want is beyond the resources of His fulness, and no danger can be so imminent but He can turn it aside. And as is His power, so is His love, 'it neither knows measure nor end.'

"It is on record, that on the day the Marquis of Argyle was to be executed, in the time of Scotia's sufferings, the marchioness and Mr. Carstairs, a godly minister, were employed in wrestling with God in his behalf, in a chamber in the Canongate, Edinburgh; earnestly pleading that the Lord would *now* seal his charter by saying to him, 'Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee.' While they were thus employed, the marquis, while settling some worldly affairs, a number of persons of quality being present, was visited in his soul with such a sense of the Divine favour as almost overpowered him; and after attempting in vain to conceal his emotion, by going to the fire and stirring it, he turned about, and bursting into tears, exclaimed, 'I see this will not do. I must now declare what the Lord hath done for my soul. He has just now, at this very instant of time, sealed my charter in these words, 'Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee.' This comfort he retained to the last, and alluded to the scene in his dying speech on the scaffold. It cannot be doubted that the bestowment of this very blessing, as asked by the marchioness and Mr. Carstairs, was a signal answer to their prayers. Faith, through the throne of grace, annihilates distance, overcomes impossibilities, brings the distant

nigh, gives visibility to things invisible, and, through confident hope, anticipates even heavenly joys.

"We are thankful beyond expression that your faith has not failed, nor your courage been daunted by the dangers and difficulties with which you have had to cope. We also rejoice that you are to live, for a time at least, under the roof of Mr. Calvert. From him and his excellent wife you will receive counsel and encouragement, also aid in acquiring the language. You will, doubtless, have many privations; but these, it may be presumed, will be felt less as you become accustomed to the scenes and circumstances by which you are surrounded. Prayer, patience, and perseverance will work wonders.....Last Sunday I spent in Leeds; having been requested to preach Mr. Christopher Dove's funeral sermon. He died in the beginning of the year,—a pattern of meek, humble love. The sermon was preached in Oxford Place chapel, and the congregation was very large."

To the same.

"April 2nd, 1855.

"THE old proverb says, 'Out of sight, out of mind;' but in some cases it utterly fails to be true. We feel that absence heightens esteem, and whets desire.

"Though some of the details contained in your last letters have filled us with distress on your account, we cannot but rejoice that you have been so comforted and sustained under the various forms of privation and trial to which you have been subjected. The ancient type of the bush burning without being consumed is verified in your experience. That is indeed a glorious religion which can keep persons in your circumstances calm, confident, holy, hopeful, and happy. A compilation of missionary experiences, if well selected, would constitute a manual of Christian evidences little less convincing than Paley's. In your short missionary history we see the providence of God illustrated, the power of God displayed, the wisdom of

God exemplified, and His faithful promises fulfilled. 'The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.' 'His kingdom ruleth over all.' Britain and Fiji are alike under His eye, and His people resident in each are His portion. Your continued preservation in the midst of such dangers affords a glorious demonstration of His power. May He ever say to the troubled sea, to barbarous men, and to wasting disease, 'Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm!' Keep them, O Lord, as the apple of Thine eye!

"Our joy at the glad tidings of the conversion of the Bau Chief was greatly tempered by the accounts of his ill-health, and of the plottings of his heathen subjects. But the 'Notices' just received inform us that thirteen hundred of his people have followed his example in bowing the knee to Jesus; so that we may hope his life will be preserved, and that the Gospel is destined to effect a speedy triumph where Satan has had his seat. This turning from heathenism to Christianity will increase your feeling of security, and furnish additional opportunities of usefulness among the women and children. In many cases we presume the conversion of the natives implies only a nominal submission to the truth; but this, we trust, will soon be followed by a change of heart,—and for this we pray."

On the 23rd of the same month he wrote again:—

"We regard the progress of the Gospel in your islands, considering the barbarous state of society, to be perfectly astonishing. Without the aid of miracles Truth miraculously triumphs. We hope Thakombau continues faithful, and that his enemies have submitted, or are being clothed with shame. Our prayer is, that he may hold fast whereunto he has attained, and live to be a father and benefactor to Fiji, even as King George is to Tonga and the Friendly Isles.

"Our circuit affairs, I am happy to say, continue to prosper. During these two years, we have, by the

blessing of God, been enabled to add about two hundred members to our Societies.

"We love you. We never cease to pray for you. I commend you to the care and covenant love of Him whose watchful eye never sleeps, and whose mighty arm is ever able to save."

To his son, under date of September 25th, 1855, he writes :—

"'THE blessing of the Lord not only maketh rich, but it gives peace, power, and heavenly *order*' to the soul. Life is an up-hill struggle. Instead of sighing after unclouded sunshine, and unalloyed enjoyment, it is true wisdom to make the best of present circumstances, and to turn existing difficulties into an occasion for increase of exertion, vigilance, and prayer. Whatever good is done, is generally effected in the face of opposition ; and character is formed on a noble model when we exercise self-control, self-reliance, and Divine trust, in the zealous performance of duty, notwithstanding opposition. If we do with our might whatever our hand findeth to do, the mountain will become a plain before us, and an amount of service will be accomplished which at one time we should have pronounced impossible."

In October, 1855, Mr. M'Owan visited Scotland, in company with the President of the Conference, the Rev. Isaac Keeling. From Edinburgh he writes home :—

October 16th.—"On Sunday last I was blessed in addressing the people. In the morning I preached in a large room belonging to some iron works in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. The place was crowded with a simple, earnest congregation, composed principally of English workmen and their wives. In the evening, John Street new chapel was crowded. I had some liberty in preaching on the Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Ghost. The collection of Sunday nearly

amounted to the entire proceeds of last year ; so that the people were greatly pleased with their own doings. The meeting was, on the whole, a good one ; and the collections in all amounted to twice as much as those of the two preceding years. I hope the spiritual good will remain, and that the missionary spirit which is re-kindled will produce a more efficient plan of action for the future.

“ To-day we have had a delightful ride to Edinburgh. At different stages of the journey, we had distant views of the Grampian mountains, the Achill and Pentland hills. The President enjoyed the scenery vastly. On leaving the carriage, we ascended the Castle hill, and saw all that was worth seeing in the ancient citadel of Scotland’s capital,—the regalia of Scotland, with the sword of State, etc. The view from the Castle hill was grand. I confess I was not a little moved by the scenes which have this day passed before my eyes. I seemed to renew my acquaintance with Arthur’s Seat, Calton Hill, the Mound, and other familiar objects, from which I seemed to have been parted only a few years. In the Castle we saw a beautiful portrait of Mary Queen of Scots, and spent a few minutes in the little room where James the Sixth of Scotland, and First of England, was born.”

“ ABERDEEN, *October 20th, 1855.*

“ OUR missionary meeting in Edinburgh was a good one. The chair was occupied by Dr. Greville, a good man, and a literary character. He is father to the tutor of the young East Indian princess who was brought by her father, the Rajah of Coorg, to be educated in this country. The Queen undertook to be her guardian, on condition that the rajah would not interfere with her religious convictions, should she become a Christian. She soon embraced Christianity, and the Queen stood sponsor at her baptism. Dr. Greville says, he believes she has experienced a change of heart. During one of the late visits of her Majesty to the north, the princess was sent for to Holyrood

Palace, and after many inquiries made respecting her progress in learning, the Queen and Prince Albert sat down, one on each side, while she played on the piano.

“ You have probably heard that her Majesty, during her last brief visit to Edinburgh, on her way to Balmoral, rose at five o'clock, and in a private manner visited Rose Cemetery, where Miss Hobbs (who had been a favourite domestic) is buried. She had directed that a marble tablet should be placed over the grave ; and long before the half of her subjects had left their beds, she, on the morning referred to, had paid this lovely tribute of respect to the memory of humble worth and genuine piety. Rose Cemetery lies between Edinburgh and Leith, on a beautiful slope ; and Miss Hobbs, on visiting it during a former journey of her Majesty, though then in tolerable health, had expressed a wish that she might be interred there when she died. *

“ On Wednesday evening, at Leith, I met a gentleman from Crieff, who informed me that our relatives had heard of my being in Glasgow, etc., and that they were fully calculating on a visit. Their longings awakened an irrepressible yearning in my own soul ; and though I was announced to take part in a *soirée* at Edinburgh on Thursday evening, connected with the liquidation of their chapel debt, I resolved to start for my native town next morning, taking care to leave notice why I had left, and where I had gone.

“ It is impossible for me, in the brief time I have for writing, to describe my emotions and recollections on first viewing the town where I drew my earliest breath ; and where I was, by the almighty energy of the Holy Spirit, created anew in Christ Jesus. I was about five miles distant when it first broke on my view, beautiful for situation, calling up a thousand recollections, and exciting a rush of feelings strangely commingled. Joy and sorrow, regret and thanksgiving, hope and fear,

* Miss Hobbs had been for years a member of the Wesleyan-Methodist Society.

alternately predominated, and prompted to prayer, praise, and silent meditation. I thought on my juvenile sports, not unaccompanied with youthful indiscretions; on my conversion to God; my journeys to Muthill, to hear Mr. Russell preach; the introduction of Methodism to Crieff; my beginning to preach; my first journey to Glasgow; to Dunfermline, and the devotional exercises on the road on both occasions: but I must stop."

"ARBROATH, *October 24th, 1855.*

"YOUR welcome letter, announcing the glad news from Fiji," (the birth of his first grandson,) "has just been placed in my hands. I have been on my knees to thank our Heavenly Father for His great loving-kindness, and I now return your congratulations. Let us turn the event into a fresh occasion for redoubled zeal and increased devotedness in the service of our great Benefactor.

"Several old people at Dundee claimed acquaintanceship with me, on the ground of having heard me preach thirty-eight years ago. The texts I preached from are still remembered by them; and one woman made it out that I gave her a 'note on trial.'

"As we passed along to-day, the house of Dr. Dick was pointed out to me, with its little observatory on the top. The house is pleasantly situated at Broughty Ferry. He is highly respected in the neighbourhood."

"ABERDEEN, *October 25th, 1855.*

"I HAVE felt more at home in Aberdeen than I did even in Glasgow. I have been surprised to find so many who remember me and my youthful labours in the ministry.

"We had a good day on Sunday. The chapel was crowded, many sitting in the aisles in the evening; and I trust the power of God was present to wound and to heal. The missionary meeting was well attended last night. A gentleman of the Free Church was in the chair. The audience seemed deeply interested. The collection was good.

“I also addressed the children in one of the parish charity schools: nearly two hundred fine girls were present. I am happy to say that Aberdeen is richly provided with well-conducted schools, neat and capacious places of worship, an able and evangelical clergy, as well as with a number of hospitals and reformatory institutions. There is no begging in the streets. I have not seen a man or woman the worse for liquor, nor heard an indecent or profane word uttered in the streets. The wages of the work-people are paid on Thursday night. Saturday afternoon is a general holiday, and the streets on Saturday night are scarcely more crowded than on other nights. The public-houses are entirely closed on Sunday. They shut at eleven every night, and are not permitted to open again before seven o'clock next morning. As for shops being open on Sunday, there is no such thing seen, with the exception of chemists, and even they have all the shutters up. I am much delighted to see the change. It is wonderful. The house in which I lodge is within three or four minutes' walk from the barracks, where a regiment of militia, consisting of about six hundred men, are located; and though I have been in their vicinity since Friday night, I have not seen one of them intoxicated, nor heard a brawling sound, nor a boisterous word, by night or by day. The strict regimen under which the public-houses are kept, and the orderly conduct of the officers, no doubt contribute to this happy result; but I cannot account for the change I see in the people generally, without ascribing it to the grace of God.”

To his son, on the anniversary of his birthday.

“November 14th, 1855.

“MY DEAR PETER,

“THE flight of time calls upon us to congratulate you on the return of your birthday. Standing on its eve, we bless the great Preserver for sparing you; and most earnestly do we pray that each succeeding year

may find you advancing in intelligence, piety, and permanent usefulness. Already you begin to find the day too short for the performance of its duties, and this feeling will increase as life advances. There is, therefore, much wisdom in the maxim which counsels us to 'take time by the forelock.' A prudent anticipation of duties which have to be performed, and of difficulties which must be overcome, gives us a vast advantage over the man who, driven by a pressing necessity to act, is thrown entirely on the resources of the moment. Anxiety about the future is more than a weakness, it is a *sin*, which both tortures and enfeebles its subject. Impossibilities constitute no part of our duty, and therefore should never be attempted. Duty may be difficult, but it is always practicable; and it is amazing what may be done by diligence, prayer, and perseverance. Well-directed labour is always profitable; and truth, in all its forms, is useful. This is a great encouragement to industry. One truth acquired is introductory to other truths; and one victory gained in governing ourselves, or in conquering the obstinacy or ingratitude of others, prepares the way for subsequent victories. To him that hath more 'shall be given; and he shall have abundance.' This Gospel principle is of wide application, and I hope my dear boy will long live to prove its truth, and to experience its grace. I rejoice greatly that you study rather to be useful than showy; and that in the Providence of God you are called to deal with *mind* at a period when it is most easily brought under the sway of truth and the influence of religion. O! what an honour will it be if you should be instrumental in training up a noble band of intelligent, intrepid, well-principled, and pious youths to serve the Church and the world with their pens, their godly lives, and their useful labours! I should greatly rejoice to hear that a work of conversion had commenced among them. In all revivals among the young, as among adults, there are some who do not realize our expectations, but the instances in which the work is genuine are numerous. If the youthful mind be not

deeply imbued with religious belief and feeling, it is to be feared that a latent scepticism, or a growing dislike of simple piety, will creep in.

“I remain,

“Your affectionate father,

“P. M'OWAN.”

The following extracts of letters to myself belong to this period:—

January 1st, 1855.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“ON this first day of a new year I have great pleasure in wishing you and yours health and happiness through its succeeding months. The past has had its trials, but it has also been marked by many mercies. The present will not be, in all probability, without its trials; but sustained by the power of God, and cheered by His love, we shall be preserved from fainting, and have them sanctified. My regret is, that I have turned the opportunities of the year to so little account; and this regret is heightened by a painful conviction that I must attempt the improvement of the future with diminished energies both of body and mind. My comfort is, that spiritual supplies may be obtained in augmented abundance, and one of my new year resolutions is, to be oftener and longer on my knees than I have ever been. We held our Quarterly Meeting yesterday week. We had to record an increase of eighteen members, with ninety-five on trial. We have, on the whole, a good prospect.

“I think we told you that we had a line from Fiji, dated August 14th, stating they were all well. This we felt to be a ground of great thankfulness. We unite in wishing you all at home, and at a distance, a happy new year.”

May 31st, 1855.—“Accept of our thanks for your extra letter. Though unexpected, it was most welcome. If I had not been diverted from my purpose yesterday

by another engagement, our letters would have again crossed each other on the way. When renewing tickets at Bristol Road on Sunday, an instance of your ministerial usefulness while in Cheltenham was related to me, with which I feel it my duty to acquaint you.

“ ——— said, ‘I never see you but I think of your brother John, who was in the Cheltenham Circuit when I was a scholar in the Sunday-school there. I was one of the very worst boys in the school; but one Sunday evening, after your brother had preached, I was deeply convinced, and went up to the communion rails with others. I had been there only a short time when Mr. M’Owan came and put his hand on my head, saying, ‘Ah, ———, is it you? I have been long looking for you. The Saviour will save you,’ etc. The words went like a shot to my heart. To hear the minister mention *my name* quite surprised me, and to feel his hand on my head quite overcame me. My heart was broken, and I resolved to give myself fully to God; which I have been endeavouring to do since that time.’

“This simple narrative, I confess, very much affected me. The man has a family, and has been in Birmingham for several years.

“On the same day I met one of our local preachers in the street, who told me that his wife had heard me preach in Bristol, on Abraham offering up Isaac; that up to that time she had been a Socinian, in connection with Dr. Carpenter’s church; that under that discourse she had been convinced both of the Deity of Christ, and of her personal guilt; that she subsequently found peace with God, and after living a holy and happy life, had died triumphantly about six months ago. Thus God works unseen by us, giving us strength to labour, but hiding our success from us, and thus demonstrating that the excellency of the power is of Him, and not of us.”

February 21st, 1856.—“I have to apologize for not writing sooner. Your letter of this morning is indeed

both startling and affecting. Poor Catharine !* During my first interview with her on my late visit to Scotland, being aware of her feeble and delicate state of health, I was afraid the excitement would be too much for her ; but when I called again on the Monday, she seemed fully to have recovered her self-command, and was happy, without being unduly excited. I am glad that I saw her, and had so much Christian intercourse with her and her good husband. I think I told you that she showed me an old copy of our Hymn-Book, bound in sheep, on which she evidently set a high value. I procured for her a larger and better copy, but it appears she was soon rendered incapable of using it. I believe they both fear God." (They were members of the "Relief" Denomination.)

"We were favoured, on Saturday last, with a letter from Fiji. It appears that God is carrying on His work there, with power and great glory, in the face of opposition from heathen chiefs, Romish priests, and wicked white men. Mr. Wilson says, Mr. Calvert and himself are the only strong men on the mission. Mrs. W., he adds, 'looks pale, and has frequent headaches.' My little grandson thrives nicely. Mr. Calvert returns home."

To his loved ones in Fiji.

"January 4th, 1856.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM AND JEANIE,

"WE rejoice exceedingly in the good Providence of God, by which you have both been mercifully preserved ; and we give thanks especially for the birth of your dear boy. Accept of our more than cordial congratulations, and be assured that this addition to your family has greatly increased our happiness. I return you my thanks for conferring on me the honour of calling your babe by my name. May he be spared to be a comfort to his parents ; a burning and a shining light to the Church, and a blessing to the world !

* Our sister in Glasgow, who had met with a severe accident.

“The progress which the work of God is making in your islands fills us with adoring gratitude. While we read the ample details furnished by yourselves and the other missionaries we could not help exclaiming, ‘According to this time it shall be said’ of our Israel in Fiji, ‘What hath God wrought!’ The arrival of King George with his men appears to have been most opportune; and our hope and prayers have been that no untoward event might occur during his stay to mar the pleasure which his first coming inspired.*

* This reference to the visit of King George of Tonga is explained by the following extracts from the communication of “a gentleman whose independent position and scientific acquirements entitle him to the highest credit as a competent and disinterested witness.” It was first published in “The Empire” newspaper, of Sydney, New South Wales:—

“In the early part of the year” (1855) “an extensive conspiracy was formed by the heathen party against the authority of the recently converted Bau chief. Many islands and districts that had been subject to his authority revolted; and he, whose authority and influence a few months before had extended through the greater part of Fiji, found himself deserted by all but his immediate adherents. ‘We shall see,’ said the heathen chief of Rewa, ‘whether Jehovah, your God, who is a Spirit, can save the body of Thakombau.’ But this boastful heathen was soon after attacked by dysentery, and struck down in his pride by that unseen Hand whose power he had contemned. The rebellion in the provinces, however, continued unsubdued, and the rebel party seemed fast closing in to the final catastrophe. But just at this critical moment, King George of Tonga, with thirty-six large canoes, carrying two thousand men, arrived on a friendly visit to the Bau chief. Almost immediately afterwards a Tongan chief of high rank, who was sent by George on a peaceful mission, was treacherously shot at Ovalau, one of the revolted islands; and thus the Tongans were brought into the quarrel. King George immediately made common cause with Thakombau, and active measures were taken to suppress the rebellion.” This was speedily and decisively accomplished, and the immediate results were, that “upwards of seventy towns submitted to Bau, renounced heathen customs, and put themselves under Christian

“ While we rejoice in the general aspect of prosperity with which recent events have invested Christianity in the islands, we do not forget, that to you, who are on the spot, there must be a thousand things which call for the exercise of patience, and are calculated to excite your prayerful solicitude. Indeed, we cannot but think there is something sublime in the fortitude with which God inspires you ; in the meek resignation with which He enables you to embrace His will ; in the peace and joy with which He fills your souls ; and in the intelligent and self-denying labours which you ceaselessly prosecute, for the benefit of a people among whom there is so much that is repulsive and discouraging. I regard the missionary successes of the present day, and the joyous and triumphant spirit in which missionary labour is carried on, as demonstrative proofs of the Divine character of our holy religion. And I account it a high honour from God, that He has given me a son and daughter, who promise to maintain a front-rank place in that noble band of missionary labourers who are engaged in subduing a rebel world to the sceptre of Immanuel.

“ We hope you will steadfastly believe that God is on your side,—that the hearts of kings and of all men are in His hand,—that the winds and waves are subject to His power, and that His eyes are over the righteous, and His ears open to their prayers. May He ever give His angels charge over you in all your ways ; and may His grace be sufficient for you, and His strength be perfected in your weakness !

teaching. The whole country is now so open to the Christian labourer, that demands for teachers come in much faster than they can be supplied, from districts and islands where previously there had been no opening. Since last year, no less than seventy-three new chapels and preaching-places have been occupied, and the hearers have increased from ten thousand to thirty thousand. The Christianization of Fiji and other parts of Polynesia is no merely ‘ philanthropical sentimentalism.’ ”—*Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, May, 1856.

“ We did not forget you in our Christmas and New Year’s greetings ; and then, as on all other occasions, our joys were heightened, and our fears were hushed, by the assurance that you and yours were enfolded in the everlasting arms of Infinite Love ; that you were engaged in promoting the glory of the Lord, and were journeying with us, not only to the goal of life, but to ‘ the saints’ secure abode.’

‘ Who suffer with our Master here,
We shall before His face appear,
And by His side sit down :
To patient faith the prize is sure ;
And all that to the end endure
The cross, shall wear the crown.’

“ Our watchnight services have been well attended ; and a heavenly influence rested upon the congregations. To-morrow we are to have our covenant service, and we are hoping to have our covenant God in our midst. Though the past year has been marked by many mercies, we have to mourn over much unfaithfulness and many omissions of duty. As an individual, I feel the necessity of an entire sanctification of body, soul, and spirit, and earnestly pray that it be speedily obtained.

“ May the God of Abraham be your shield, and your exceeding great reward ! May He be a God unto you, and to your seed after you ! Give little Peter a special kiss, at least once a week, from his grandpapa. Be assured we all wish you a happy new year, and many of them.”

To the same.

March 3rd, 1856.—“ The very welcome letter, *via* Valparaiso, was about eight months on the way ; but it came safely, and though it speaks of ‘ paleness and headache,’ we indulge the hope that these do not indicate any serious change in the state of Jeanie’s health.

“ If Mr. Calvert should leave, it will be to us a ground of thanksgiving that you have had such an opportunity of knowing his plans, and of marking his

spirit and judicious modes of procedure with the natives generally, and the chiefs in particular. Your prolonged and intimate intercourse with him and his excellent wife has been a dispensation of mercy and love, for which you will be thankful while you remain in the islands."

March 31st, 1856.—"We cannot express to you the pleasure we have derived from your late communications. The goodness of God in giving you health, and making you happy in the midst of trials and privations so extreme, has awakened our liveliest gratitude. The re-establishment of peace in your borders, and the wide-spread success of the mission, have filled us with astonishment. What cannot God do? Truly, He is making, through the labours of His servants, the wilderness and the solitary places glad, and the desert to rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

"You must bear with us however when we say, that our great joy has been mingled with fear, lest, whilst endeavouring to meet the necessities of the people, and overtake your numerous calls to duty, you should overtax your strength and injure health. We want *you both to live long*, and to do great damage to the kingdom of Satan. A great work lies before you, and to do it effectually you must proceed calmly, steadily, resolutely, perseveringly, prayerfully, and in all things be content to 'make haste slowly.' The battle is the Lord's, and it is to be won in all the earth, 'not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.' While the natives are to receive the law of the Lord from your lips, do not refuse to take advice from them respecting journeying, sleeping, eating, and such like things. 'Experience teaches fools:' and by long observation, they have, doubtless, acquired a traditional knowledge of common things, common dangers, and common helps, which only experience in their own country could teach.

"We are now rejoicing in a good work which has broken out among the young people connected with Cherry Street chapel. Three, belonging to our most

respectable families have been stirred up, and have joined the Society, and other young persons are under awakenings. This, on many accounts, is a ground of great thankfulness. The affairs of the Connexion are also improving. Besides having peace, many of the circuits enjoy spiritual prosperity.

“Death continues to thin the ranks of the Lord’s militant host on earth, adding in the same proportion to the company of the redeemed before the throne. The venerable Joseph Sutcliffe has, at length, gone home. He was one of the happiest Christians that ever lived, and really the finest specimen of sanctified old age I ever knew. Dr. Beecham, also, has been called to his reward somewhat suddenly. He returned from his American mission, just as the last Conference was closing; and the probability is, that he overtaxed his strength and energies in prosecuting the onerous duties with which his mission was connected. His end was not only peaceful, but triumphant.

“Our next appointment will probably be York. But concerning all our future plans and prospects, we say, ‘If the Lord will.’ It is His presence that makes our paradise. We are endeavouring to fill the allotted space, and answer all the great designs of our Saviour God; but we are ashamed on account of our innumerable shortcomings. Your letters always do us good, therefore write by every opportunity. With more love than I can express, I remain,” etc.

From the Bristol Conference, 1856, he writes home:—

“I SPENT yesterday at Dursley, among a simple, loving, grateful people. The services of the sanctuary were to me very refreshing, and I trust many of the congregation found it good to be there. I addressed the school in the afternoon, and hope that the seed sown there will also produce good fruit.

“I am striving to keep up the spirit of prayer in my soul, and am anxious to obtain a new baptism, to fit me for my duties and responsibilities during the coming year.”

July 28th, 1856.—“Yesterday we had interesting and edifying services. I heard Mr. Bowers in the forenoon, on, ‘But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him.’ Aneloquent and appropriate discourse: in some parts it was almost overwhelming. In the afternoon I visited good Mr. Riggall. He has been a prisoner in the house ever since he attended the Birmingham Conference two years ago. He is reduced to a state of extreme weakness, and is only kept alive by incessant watching and the most tender and attentive nursing. Through the great feebleness of his physical powers, his religious enjoyments are often low. I found him, however, calmly and confidently trusting in God his Saviour. Patience seems to have had its perfect work in him. No murmuring word escapes his lips, neither does he utter an impatient longing to escape suffering, either by being restored to health, or by departing to be with Christ. *Self*, considered as the Redeemer’s rival, appears to be slain, and his whole conversation was a magnifying of the mercy of God, and of the merits and mediation of Christ. He often appears to himself and others to be dying, and probably feels as much pain and agony as he will do when he ‘dies, his father’s God to meet.’”

CHAPTER FOURTEENTH.

YORK.

At this Conference (1856) Mr. M'Owan was appointed to the York circuit, with the additional office of chairman of the district. He writes again to Fiji.

“YORK, *November 14th, 1856.*

“Your last letters were to us precious treasures. The journal was read with thrilling interest. The success with which God continues to crown your missionary toil fills us with grateful admiration. The fever so gently adverted to, was the dark spot in your horizon on which our eye rested with involuntary intensity, while the statement that the disease had abated fringed the cloud with light. We hoped you had told us the whole truth, and yet we feared that your wish to spare us had led you to veil the worst. As on other occasions the Throne of Grace was our refuge, and there we were enabled to unburden our hearts in the presence of Him who is our Father, Physician, and Friend.

“The ‘Watchman’ will furnish you with Conference details. Mr. Young performed the duties of his high office with credit to himself and with satisfaction to his brethren. The most remarkable feature in our proceedings was the great extension of our out-door services. On two of the Sundays between forty and fifty sermons were preached in the streets and pleasure-grounds of the city.

“Our home affairs generally wore a favourable aspect. Zeal for the missionary enterprise is certainly on the increase. In the York circuit, and I may say throughout the York District, it is almost at the boiling point. We shall raise in the circuit, this year,

about £1,200. The city does nobly, but the country Societies are not behind. I attended a village meeting the other day, at which, with a sermon in the afternoon, we collected £16. At our juvenile meeting, which was held last week, we raised, with missionary-boxes, about £220. You may imagine how delightful this is to us.

"This is, in Methodist phrase, a "*hard circuit*," but there is much to sweeten and reward toil. Our prospects are cheering, and the people are kind. My engagements are numerous and engrossing. Fully one half of my afternoons and evenings are devoted to country work."

The following wise counsels may be applicable to the case of other missionaries beside his son-in-law.

"YORK, *December 11th*, 1856.

"DEAREST WILLIAM,

"ABOUT a fortnight ago we received your spring letters, with the journal. Our thanksgivings often ascend to heaven for your signal deliverances both by sea and land, and our prayers have been stimulated by a knowledge of your growing difficulties and diminished help from fellow-labourers.

"After reading your letters and journals over and over again, one fear fills our minds, and it is this, lest, seeing so much work to be done, and so few to do it, you should allow your zeal to outstrip your prudence, and attempt labours which, in such a climate, will not only waste strength, but endanger life. A missionary in Fiji, and in various other parts, is called to be a true Scriptural *episcopos*, or overseer, as well as a preacher of the Gospel. He is to all subordinate teachers what a general is to his inferior officers: he has to teach them, that they may teach others; and, by a wise and judicious guidance of their movements, he moves and blesses the whole of the Societies under his care. Fiji must be mainly dependent on native teachers, and every scheme and means which tends to increase

their knowledge of Divine things, and to improve their piety, is of the highest importance.

“Your journeys by sea and land come with great frequency. The out-stations must be visited occasionally ; but if the time spent at each place were somewhat prolonged, the necessity of another visit might, perhaps, be postponed to a more distant day. In Fiji, where you are so dependent on winds and tides, and have to grapple with difficulties wholly beyond your control, it may be perilous to carry out even the wisest plan. When we are overtaken with danger in the path of duty, it is our glorious privilege to look to God for defence and deliverance ; but were we to court danger, and provoke opposition, in expectation of receiving help from on high, our confidence in such a case would not be faith, but presumption. It is difficult, I am aware, to restrain the fervours of a zeal which has been kindled at the foot of the Cross ; which weeps over a ruined race ; and which, constrained by the love of Christ, is continually prompting to self-sacrificing efforts for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Nor ought such a zeal ever to be restrained on the principle of worldly wisdom, the fear of man, or the mere love of life. Not only missionaries, but Christians, generally, are required to prefer Christ before father or mother, sisters or brothers, houses or lands, wife or children,—yea, or life itself. But all this conceded, it is still our duty to consider how we may best husband time, talents, and health, so as to secure, in the largest degree, the great purposes for which life is given. Missionary life in Fiji is at present of almost infinite value, and while a thousand reasons call for its entire consecration to God, the same motives require that it be not needlessly risked.

“These remarks, my dear William, are not made on the supposition that mere human wisdom can guide you in your arduous and difficult work ; much less are they intended to discourage you in its zealous prosecution. No. We rejoice in your entire devotion to your great Master's cause, and our earnest prayer is, that the

unction of the Holy Ghost may rest upon you, animating your zeal, enlightening your judgment, guiding your counsels, and giving you in all things a single eye to the glory of God. But at the same time, we see your fellow-labourers drooping by your side, and we think we see also, in the details of your own journal, such a system of high-pressure service, as in our belief no man can long sustain in such a climate, and therefore we wish you to be careful of yourself, in order that you may successfully, and for a long period, promote the cause of the Redeemer in Fiji."

To the same.

YORK, February 21st, 1857.—“ We have been holding special services both in the city and country, to promote the revival of the work of God, and, I am happy to say, not without effect. Many persons have been awakened, penitents have found mercy, backsliders have been recovered, and our members generally have been quickened. These services are still proceeding, and the blessing of the Most High attends them. They have involved us in much additional labour, but it has been pleasing work. Our local preachers have rendered us valuable aid, and they have done it in the kindest spirit. What a wonderful system Methodism is ! It not only saves those who embrace its doctrines and submit to its discipline ; but it qualifies and disposes them to become a means of blessing to others. The eloquent and powerful prayers I have heard in connection with our services have excited at once my gratitude and my admiration. Christianity possesses an inherent self-propagating energy, and that energy is nothing less than the power of the Highest.”

To his Son.

May 1st, 1857.—“ Trials and disappointments throw us on first principles, and to the Christian these never fail. ‘The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.’ This great truth raises the hallelujahs of heaven, nor

ought the inhabitants of the earth to rejoice in it the less. 'Before honour is humility.' The biography of all saints might be quoted in illustration of this truth, 'All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.' This is one of the sweetest and most comprehensive truths in the whole Bible, and it is not given in the form of a promise, but declared as an experienced fact. 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life.' *The crown of life*—and not that alone, but all that leads to it—all that prepares for it. No soldier ever won *fame* by mere parade exercise. The discipline implied in enduring hardness may be severe, but it is salutary.

"Your Heavenly Father has not forgotten you, but He chastens for your profit. Wait His time, it is best. 'The vision shall speak.'"

From the Liverpool Conference he writes to Mrs. M'Owan :—

August 3rd, 1857.—"While we have many things to cheer us connected with our Conference, we are also humbled and solemnized. The venerable Dr. Bunting is not with us, and others of our fathers show signs of decayed energy and strength. All this is monitory, and we pray that it may be sanctified to us.

I spent yesterday at Chester, and found myself at home amongst the people. I hope the Word was not preached in vain. A clergyman who attended one of the services said he had never felt more of the power of God in any religious service. This testimony was made to one of our friends as he was leaving the chapel. I succeeded in tiring myself thoroughly ; having had to administer the Lord's Supper after the evening sermon.

To Mr. and Mrs. Wilson.

York, September, 1857.—"Our recent Conference came and went without much observation ; Dr. Bunting

was unable to attend, and his absence and illness seemed to cast a gloom over the whole proceedings. He sent a message of love to the Conference and to the Missionary Committee of Review, in which, after pointing out some matters of moment respecting Africa and India, he expressed his happiness in God his Saviour, and his firm belief in the doctrines of 'EVANGELICAL ARMINIANISM.'

"Dr. Bunting can have no successor in our section of the Christian Church ; but as Providence deprives us of His wise counsels we are thankful to see that He is raising up a numerous class of gifted men, who, by the exercise of their united wisdom and counsels, will conduct the affairs of the Connexion in accordance with the Divine will. It is well that the ship is in still waters, and that the storm of strife has been stilled. May the manifested presence of the 'Galilean Pilot,' ever give us occasion to say, 'The best of all is, God is with us.'"

"I feel, more deeply than ever, that our great and almost only resource for the conversion of the world is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Churches. We are dim-sighted as it respects our duty and our danger : and God the Holy Ghost alone can open our eyes, and so teach us that we shall apply our hearts to the study and practice of religion. We are selfish, self-willed, and self-sufficient, and it appears as if nothing short of a plenary effusion of the Spirit could draw individuals and Churches away from the diversified forms of self-seeking and self-reliance, and make them simply and earnestly intent on glorifying Christ : seeking with singleness of purpose, and in the use of all possible means, the accomplishment of His design in relation to themselves and the world. We want more of that faith which is 'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' Many professors live as if Christ were in His grave ; as if the devil were a myth ; and as if eternal bliss and woe were figures of speech. We need the Holy Spirit to convince us of 'damning unbelief,' as well as to

draw us to prayer, and to be in us a Spirit of grace and supplications. I write this with sober sadness, and wish to take the share of blame and shame which belongs to myself. May the Lord revive His work in every soul, and in every land where it is begun ! ”

To the same.

“ November 14th, 1857.

“ WE sympathize with you in your difficulties respecting servants, but hope that, as heretofore, ‘ the Lord will provide.’ Too much pains cannot be taken with the female part of the population. Woman’s influence for good or evil is all-pervading ; and as it impregnates the springs of life in childhood, and regulates them, more or less, in the family circle, every thing which tends to its elevation and sanctification is of great importance. Much of the misery and confusion which characterizes heathen society is attributable to the neglect and degradation to which woman has been subjected ; and both in the Acts of the Apostles, and the history of modern missions, we have evidence that the quiet operation of female influence is a chosen instrument with God for the regeneration of society. No wise word can be spoken, and no well-directed effort can be made to improve the intellect, or convert the soul, of the women, without producing fruit. From the girl who nurses your baby up to the wives of your chiefs, they are all influential. You have already had at least one honourable woman, who, living and dying, has adorned the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour ; and I trust she was the first of many.

“ I need not assure you that we continue to take a deep and absorbing interest in you and yours, as well as in the great work in which you are engaged. If I were twenty years younger, I should certainly covet to be with you, to share your toils, your joys, and your trials. As it is, we can only hold you up in the arms of faith and prayer. And we rejoice that the great Head of the Church is making use of you in casting

down the strong holds of the enemy, and in extending and building up His own kingdom of peace and righteousness. This is far more honourable than if you were employed as the representative of her Majesty at the first court in Europe. Remember that the work is the Lord's, and that He loveth mercy rather than sacrifice. Take care of your health and life. Begin and end all your works with prayer. It is the blessing of God that maketh rich. And unless He establish the work of our hands upon us, we labour in vain, and spend our strength for nought.....The training of native agents, both male and female, ought ever to be with you a work of the first importance.

"May the God of all grace bless you and your labours, and may He defend your work from every weapon that may be formed against it!"

To the late Rev. W. M. Bunting.

"YORK, December 3rd, 1857.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I HAVE to apologize for being so long in expressing my sympathy with you under the aggravated attack of your old complaint, by which you were prostrated when Miss Bunting last wrote. I have had a three weeks' run of country appointments, which called me from home nearly every afternoon and evening; and the result of exposure in the damp, dark nights we have lately had has been an attack of influenza. While I have myself been on the invalid list, and unable to read and write, I have endeavoured to turn my time by day and night to some profit by praying for beloved friends whom affliction seems to make dearer and more beloved.

"I heard a beautiful and affecting instance of the power of Jesu's name the other day. A poor but godly woman, who had parted with all her furniture, etc., in order to keep out of the workhouse, was, through the influence of friends, introduced to one of the almshouses in this city. Being very feeble, and almost

helpless, she was carried to the door of her little unfurnished room, and she had then literally to crawl on her hands and knees. Hearing some of the bystanders remark on her destitution and weakness, she cheerfully said, 'T is true, I am a poor creature, and bring nothing with me, but I have the blessed Jesus in my heart.' The words were caught up and repeated. The other inmates crowded in to see her who had 'Jesus in her heart;' and it is hoped that some of them have begun to seek the same heavenly treasure. The poor woman's room is now comfortably furnished, and she praises God all the day long."

To Mr. and Mrs. Wilson.

"YORK, June 7th, 1858.

"WE are now enjoying summer weather, rejoicing in a bright sky, beautiful flowers, and rich prospects of an abundant harvest. For the last twelve months the country has been suffering from a general stagnation of trade and commerce, brought on by reckless and unprincipled speculation. I am, however, happy to say, that a change for the better has set in, and confidence is being gradually restored. Trade revives, and the industrious classes are far more generally employed. Provisions have been cheap during the panic, which was a great mitigation of the calamity to the working people.

"In America, the distress has been so sanctified, that a great revival of religion has broken out,—thousands and tens of thousands have been smitten with conviction of sin; at mid-day they have resorted in crowds to places opened for prayer-meetings. The theatres have been left empty, and the churches and other places of worship have been insufficient to contain the multitudes flocking to hear the preaching of the Gospel, whilst people in all grades of society have publicly solicited the prayers of congregations that they might be saved. All the evangelical communities in the land share the gracious shower, and

the movement is singularly distinguished by the absence of party spirit. No special instrumentality has been employed in producing it, or carrying it on. Prayer seems to be more prevalent than preaching. The converts are of all ages ; but the great majority, it is said, are adults. This is *glorious* ; and, coming in connection with poverty and distress, it is hoped it will be permanent in its results.

“ Though we have no such work in this country, yet our own Connexion enjoys general prosperity. The augmentation of our missionary income during a year of such commercial distress is a pleasing feature in the history of the body. Our people have acted as if they really believed the Saviour was on His throne, expecting till His enemies be made His footstool.

“ It is impossible for me to express the estimation in which we hold your recent communication, and the exultant joy with which we have read of the glorious successes which the God of all grace has conferred upon your labours, as well as those of your fellow-helpers in the work.....It is manifestly the Lord's doing, and to Him be the undivided praise.

“ Your nearness to the seat of war has been to us a source of deep solicitude ; but while we pray that the everlasting God may be your refuge, we have ventured to hope that He will say, as He has done before, ‘ Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.’ We think you act wisely in keeping aloof from the quarrels of the natives. You publish the Gospel of Peace ; you represent the Prince of Peace ; and you profess purposes of peace and good-will to all in Fiji ; and therefore no chief or tribe has any right to expect that you will do more than give good counsel, and mediate for peace when occasion offers. To do this is a work of mercy ; and all prudent and prayerful attempts of this kind will add to your legitimate influence, and will endear your names and persons to all the right-minded in the islands. In your circumstances, and surrounded with a fiery and subtle people, you need fortitude, calmness, self-command, and patience, such as God only can give. May the

very God of Peace soon say to the stormy passions of men, 'Peace, be still!'

"I am happy to inform you that our circuit has shared the reviving showers with which our Israel has been generally favoured during the winter months. Some of our country Societies which exhibited melancholy signs of stagnation and decay have been quickened into newness of life. Notorious sinners have been converted, family feuds have been quenched, and many young people, as well as some whole families, have been brought to God. In reference to several of these Societies, I often said in my heart, 'By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small.' And the means by which deliverance came, clearly indicated the wisdom and sovereignty of God. Pride and vain boasting were hid from us, and we were made to own again and again, 'This is the finger of God.' In the city, too, we have had many conversions, and some of a striking character. For all these manifestations of mercy and power, I trust we are thankful; but wickedness and irreligion are still awfully rife, and a richer outpouring of the Holy Spirit is felt to be indispensable. Personally I am often bowed down under an oppressive sense of ignorance, unprofitableness, and insufficiency; but by leaning on Him who is mighty to save, I am preserved from fainting, and am cheered by seeing a noble array of young ministers rising up, who, by their talents and piety, promise to be burning and shining lights.

"Your fidelity, devotedness, and success are to us a constant source of joy, and I trust you will ever study to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord. Our happiness is wrapt up in the faithful discharge of our duty; and if we honour God, He has pledged Himself to honour us. May you in all things prove that your sufficiency is of God! Your domestic happiness increases ours. We often transpose ourselves in imagination into the midst of your little circle, and share the pleasure you have in hearing the prattle and in receiving the kisses and embraces of your dear

boys. The Lord bless them, and make them a blessing! Seek grace and heavenly wisdom to bring them up in the way they should go. You have our daily prayers ascending in your behalf; and what is infinitely better, you have the intercession of Jesus continually made for you and yours."

From the Hull Conference, 1858, he writes to Mrs. M'Owan:—

July 18th.—"I preached last night at George Yard, and felt much at home among surviving old friends and the children of departed ones. Some of them seemed overjoyed on seeing their old minister again. I am greatly humbled, and at the same time very grateful, to find so many persons in Hull who acknowledge to have received good under my ministry. Almost every day I hear references made to my past labours. I wonder at

‘The goodness of God, Employing a clod
His tribute of glory to raise.’

I trust all these references to past labours will stimulate to greater fidelity in future."

The extent of his usefulness when stationed in this circuit is indicated by so much fruit appearing after the lapse of a quarter of a century.

In the spring of 1859 he went on a deputation on behalf of the Missionary Society to the Bath District, and from Bradford (Wiltshire) wrote home as follows:—

"This is an interesting town, and the neighbourhood is beautiful. The town is built on the face of a steep hill. Many of the houses are antique, being about two hundred years old. The house in which Mr. Wesley lodged still stands, and it is reported that when questioned one morning, on coming down stairs,

whether he had slept well, he replied, 'Sister Dolly, your bed is like a true Briton, firm and unyielding.' The house in which Thomas Olivers (one of the early Methodist preachers, and author of the hymn beginning, 'The God of Abraham praise,' etc.) wrought at his trade as a shoemaker, is also pointed out to visitors."

This year (1859) he attended the Conference at Manchester, and from thence he writes to his family :—

July 26th.—“ I preached on Sunday evening at Oxford Road chapel with some degree of liberty, and several preachers and others have spoken of it as a season of power.

“ The Missionary Committee of Review is now sitting, and Mr. George Scott has been called upon to give an account of his late visit to Sweden. From beginning to end it seems to have been a feast of Christian love. When he entered the pulpit from which he had been driven by a mob fifteen years before, he was so overcome that he could only tell them how much he loved them. The two men who hired the mob, and were then rich, have lost the whole of their property. One of them is in a workhouse, and the other has lost his sight.

“ Mr. Scott supposes that a quarter of a million of persons of all classes in the country are decided Christians. One of the nobles is a lay preacher, and as such is greatly owned of God. He sent his carriage fifty miles to convey Mr. Scott to his house. Many noble ladies who were passionately fond of dancing gave up the practice as soon as they were converted. About two hundred men itinerate through the country, distributing the Scriptures, delivering addresses, and holding religious meetings. One of the royal princesses is a thoroughly devoted Christian ; she has translated a work of great piety and sound theology. She sometimes sent to a private religious meeting a noble lady, like-minded with herself, in order that she might repeat to her as much as she could remember of what was said

on the various subjects brought before the meeting. It was conducted by the gentleman who took Mr. Scott's place when he was driven away. He had received a university education, but declined ordination, under an impression that God had called him to be an evangelist for the spread of religion throughout the land. This lady was in the habit of walking a mile and a half to the meeting referred to. The king, hearing this, sent for her, and inquired whether what had been told him was true. She admitted the fact. 'Then,' replied he, 'you shall do so no more.' The lady was about to plead for herself, when the king added, 'I shall in future order one of the royal carriages to take you.'

"Dr. Dixon has stated, in the Missionary Committee, that he regards the work in Fiji as the most marvellous that has ever been wrought on the earth. He urges that we continue to press the Government to take the islands under the protection of the Crown.

"The meeting of this morning was of an extraordinary character; I think I may say we never had such good speaking or a deeper feeling of interest."

During the sittings of this Conference, the sad tidings were received of the death of Mrs. Wilson in Fiji. This was made known to Mr. M'OWan in as gentle a manner as possible. He was deeply affected, but said little. Without loss of time he made arrangements concerning the business which, as chairman of the district, he had to transact at Conference, and hastened home to mingle his grief with that of his family on account of this distressing and unexpected bereavement. His daughter observes, that this "gave a shock to his constitution, from which he never fully recovered."

The spirit in which he submitted to this painful dispensation is beautifully brought before the reader in the two or three following letters:—

To Mr. Wilson.

"YORK, August 18th, 1859.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,

"UP to the present it has always been a pleasure and a high privilege to write to you; but I now take up my pen in grief and sorrow, because I can no longer join with yours the sweet name of her whom you and we loved beyond the power of expression. The news of her death on the 14th of May reached us on Tuesday last in a letter from Mr. Eggleston, along with a letter dated March 10th,—the last letter written by her own dear hand. Not having heard of her illness, the tidings came upon us like a thunderbolt, and to the present we can hardly realize the solemn fact. That she triumphed over the last enemy, and glorified God in her death no less than she had done in her life, we can readily believe, and in this we greatly rejoice. Her course was short but bright: her record is on high. But her toil has terminated; she has entered into rest, and her works shall follow. We had fondly hoped that she would live and labour long in her great Master's service, and that having earned a good degree, she would be permitted to return home with yourself and your dear children to spend the remainder of her days in our home work in happy England. Had it so pleased our God, we should have been exceedingly glad; but such was not His will, and we, through grace, submit, remembering that she was His, in a higher sense than she was ours. If she has found an early grave, she has also obtained an early crown. The great end of life was accomplished. She has

'Glorified her God below,
And found her way to heaven.'

"We loved her greatly, but I cannot think we idolized her. We gave her to the Lord without grudging; and though we did not calculate on her precious dust being laid in a foreign land, yet we knew that was possible; and now that it has taken place, we do not, and dare not, murmur. 'The Lord gave, and

the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord.' What the ocean is compared to the fountains and streams, what the sun is to the lesser lights, *that* God is to the best and most beauteous creatures that exist. He gave us our dear Jeanie, and he also endowed her with the tender affections, the firm resolves, and the calm heroism which distinguished her above many of her sex ; and now that He has resumed the gift, and enshrined it in His own glory, we say, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord !' Nature weeps, and affection sorrows, but through grace we do not rebel. We would not alter the decree which called her to the skies, if we could. We bend under the stroke, but we kiss the rod, knowing that it is in a Father's hand, and that that hand is guided alike by infinite wisdom and by infinite love."

In the midst of his deep sorrow, he wrote the following letter of condolence to Mrs. Leppington, on the death of her husband, the Rev. J. C. Leppington.

"DEAR MADAM,

"THE melancholy news of your heavy bereavement reached me while I was in the hurry of preparing for the Stationing Committee, and I delayed the expression of my sympathy with you in hope of a quiet season at Manchester, during the Conference. That delay I exceedingly regret ; and now that the sovereign Lord of all has been pleased to make us your companions in sorrow, I wish to repair the omission by assuring you of our deep sympathy, and that we shall not fail to pray that you may be sustained under the stunning effects of the awfully sudden stroke.

" 'In the midst of life we are in death.' None of his brethren looked more healthy, or spoke with more energy or eloquence, than he at the Hull Conference. Whilst reading his valuable papers in the Magazine during the past year, I often rejoiced in his lengthened life, and rapidly developing talents, little thinking how

soon he was to teach us how to die, and how transcendently important it is to be always ready. He was a faithful friend and an instructive companion. Above most men I ever knew, he was candid, generous, transparent, and thoroughly sincere ; a keen detector of error in argument, and hollowness in profession, but quicksighted in his search for truth and true excellency ; eminently tender-hearted also in dealing with the subjects of affliction and bereavement.

"To you the loss of one so dear, and so richly qualified to make domestic life happy, is unutterable. And coming upon you so suddenly, and under peculiarly trying circumstances, it must have been all but overwhelming. Indeed, were it not for the good hand of God upon us, such strokes would quite overwhelm us. *

"You will have heard that the Most High has been pleased to fill for us also a cup of sorrow in the death of our dear Mrs. Wilson. The news took us by surprise. For some time back we knew that they were surrounded by wars and rumours of wars ; but we were living in hope that their covenant God would still be a wall of fire around them, as He had been the glory in the midst of them. It appears that an epidemic influenza had spread among the people, and that Mrs. Wilson, with her usual ardour and energy, had devoted herself to the sick. In a letter written before she was taken ill she speaks of the people coming in canoes with their children for medicines, and tells us that she had been employed for some time from morning till night in administering medicines, and joyfully adds, that none of her patients had died, though some were

* "On the day of his death, July 7th, 1859, he retired to his study to read a manuscript for the press. After a few hours, a sudden and spasmodic attack on the chest ensued, which resisted all the remedies applied ; and, almost before his bewildered family realized the sense of danger, he passed away, leaving it impossible to determine whether he had even the consciousness of dying."—Minutes of Conference, 1859.

not out of danger. Combined with the fatigue consequent on these labours of love, news were daily arriving of the barbarities practised by the heathen who were fighting in the neighbourhood; and while thus exhausted by labour and distracted by fear, fever seized herself, and soon proved fatal. She died in the full triumph of faith.

"Excuse me, my dear Mrs. Leppington, for thus obtruding our griefs upon you in what was meant to be a letter of condolence. We are endeavouring to comfort one another by calling to mind the gracious words written respecting the blessedness of those who have 'entered within the veil;' and we find motives for resignation in the belief that God cannot err, and that He has a right to do what He will with His own."

To the Rev. W. M. Bunting.

"YORK, August 26th, 1859.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I AM distressed to hear that you are so very ill; and though in the confusion of packing in preparation for removal, I cannot forbear telling you how kind we all take it, that you should have directed Miss Bunting to convey to us such tender expressions of your sympathy and condolence, notwithstanding your sufferings. It is indeed a great privilege to be divinely laid upon the hearts of God's people; and we are led to attribute much of the support and consolation we have received from above, in our deep distress, to the intercessions which have been offered up on our account through the one Mediator, by so many dear Christian friends. We have no wish to disguise the fact, that we were at first stunned and all but crushed by the stroke.....But we have found God to be a very present help in time of trouble; His strength has been made perfect in our weakness; and though with bleeding hearts and faltering tongues, we are enabled to say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

Mr. Wilson has kindly favoured us with the following affecting particulars of the death of his wife:—

“At the time of her affliction and death the whole group of islands was in a state of great agitation caused by wars and rumours of wars. This was specially the case in the immediate vicinity of Bua, where we resided. I asked her whether she would like to leave the station for a short time, until the conflict should cease or moderate. I shall not forget the energy with which she replied, saying, *‘We are where God and His Church have placed us, and if we were to flee, I should be ashamed of my name. He can and will protect us.’* In addition to the sanguinary war which then swept the island, fever broke out among the natives, and many died. Among the number was a very fine Christian girl, nurse to our children. On one Sabbath she was in the house of God, the next in her grave. This deeply affected Mrs. Wilson, and was the beginning of her illness. When she was first seized with the epidemic, she had such views of sin and of her unfaithfulness that she wept aloud, and earnestly prayed for a fresh manifestation of God’s forgiving mercy. I directed her thoughts to Christ, repeated His promises, and read His Word to her. She said, ‘I see. It is Jesus. I will trust to Jesus.’ The next night she was sleepless; but in the morning as the most joyous news she could communicate, she said, ‘Jesus has been with me.’ After two days her affliction had assumed the most serious form, and we felt ourselves to be in a very trying situation. The war was becoming more alarming,—the epidemic was raging among the people. We were in a solitary station, scores of miles away from the society of a brother missionary’s family, and no medical help or civilized aid could be procured. When we were looking for the return of a canoe, which had been dispatched for aid, we heard that it had not proceeded more than fifteen miles on its voyage out, having been all

but wrecked by a hurricane that was blowing at the time, and that the men on board had narrowly escaped being drowned.

"In our solitude and sorrow we turned to God. And partaking of the Lord's Supper together, we commended ourselves to Him for protection, help, and consolation. After a short interval, she called for me, and said, 'I cannot tell you all, but this I say, Jesus is all-sufficient; yes, Jesus is God: and one word remains with me, *Be careful for nothing.*'

"Considering the tender age of our three children,—the eldest not five years of age, and the youngest an infant of six months,—the lonely and dangerous circumstances in which we were placed,—but, above all, the prospect of losing one so useful and beloved,—made me say, 'I shall be crushed.' But she reproved me instantly, and lovingly said, 'How can you be crushed if the all-sufficient God be with you? He is almighty. He is all-sufficient!'

"The night when she and all around thought she was dying, and before any of our brethren could come to our help, her mind was lucid, and she uttered many sweet sayings about her Saviour. 'His blood saves me. His Spirit sanctifies my soul. Jesus is God, and therefore all-sufficient. All things are possible to God. I am happy, strangely happy! God's will be done! I wish to live; but am not unwilling to die. Is it a sin to wish to live? God's will be done!'

"Calling a native teacher who sat near her, weeping, she said, 'Isaac, is it because you think Jesus cannot save me, that you cry? Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I love Fijians, I love you.' Prayer and praise employed the hours of that which we all concluded must be the last night of her life. Towards morning she asked for the children, to kiss them, and to bless them, which she did in a most solemn and impressive manner, and charged me to take them to England.

"Being asked if she had a word for her father and family at home, the deepest feeling was manifested,

and she said, 'Were I to speak about them, would not life go?' I thought it might, and did not press the matter; but recovering, she said, 'Send my love to them all, not forgetting my new sister' (the wife of her recently married brother) 'and your mother. I think of them all. Now I am going to heaven.'

"After this she lingered for several days, during which time help arrived. Mrs. Binner, (now Mrs. Churchill, of Windsor,) the Revs. Joseph Waterhouse, and J. S. Fordham. This mission party, hearing of our affliction through the brave and excellent Christian teachers who encountered the perils of the sea in a frail canoe, had hastened to our aid at great inconvenience and danger to themselves. They cheered our hearts greatly, and Jeanie was most grateful. She did not say much after this; but with a fortitude amounting to real heroism she prepared to leave all, and go to God. She often tried to sing, as she said it assuaged her pain. When I thought her spirit was departing, I said, 'Do you still put your trust in Jesus?' she replied, '*In Jesus alone—none but Jesus, the First and the Last.*' 'Thou Shepherd of Israel and mine.' She tried to repeat the hymn, but strength failed: she then exclaimed, 'Jesus alone!'

"Frequently in her half-lucid moments she said, 'Where is papa and mamma? Don't they know I am ill? Why do they not come?' The last words she uttered were to kind Mrs. Binner, 'It is the same.' 'What is the same? Jesus?' 'Yes: and *it is the same here,*' pointing to her heart. The last words which she heard were those of our Lord, John xiv. 1: 'Let not your heart be troubled,' etc. I then pronounced the benediction, and with it her liberated and happy spirit returned to God.

"Not only did the mission party—Mrs. Binner, and Messrs. Waterhouse and Fordham—show all attention and sympathy, but the Christian natives, from the chief to the youngest in the school, showed a sympathy and depth of feeling which were most comforting to the bereaved, expressive also of their estimate of the

departed, and proved that her love and labours among them were not in vain.

“The choicest of the ground was given for a resting-place for the first of the mission band which slumbers in Bua. Some tons of sand, coral, and water-worn pebbles were so arranged as to form a sepulchre worthy of a princess; the whole surrounded by native mahogany railings, well made by native carpenters, and overshadowed by the graceful palm-trees. The station was left for three months under the care of native Christians, and up to our return not a living thing, not the smallest article, had been destroyed or injured. Christianity had done its work. It had opened fountains of feeling deep and pure in the breasts of these once savage people, and expressed its power in their honesty and fidelity.”

As this closes the family connection and correspondence of Mr. M'Owan with Fiji, we may here take occasion to observe that this remarkable mission still continues to prosper. The general Report of the Wesleyan Missionary Society for 1870 states:—

“The Fiji Islands District reports considerable progress. There are twelve European missionaries engaged in the work of civilizing and converting the native population, being assisted in their duties by twenty-one ordained, and twenty-three unordained, native missionaries. There are also 1,128 Catechists and other lay preachers, who officiate in 277 places of worship, the united attendants at which amount to 107,771 souls. There are 17,401 church-members, and 4,514 on trial for membership. The native schools are attended by 36,691 scholars, adults and youths.”

The Scriptures also are translated into the native language; and, by the liberal aid of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the printing, they have a wide

circulation, being eagerly brought and read by the people. Civilization follows in the train of Christianity. Many persons from Australia, etc., have resorted to the islands; and the cultivation of cotton of the very best quality, and other productions of the soil, already assumes large proportions. It will be well if the work of God be not injured by the bad example and influence of the white men, as has been too much the case in other groups of the Pacific Islands.

The appointment of Mr. M'Owan to the York circuit was not the most suitable for him at this period of his life. So far as the peaceful and prosperous state of the work of God, and the friendliness of the people, were concerned, all was well. But the chairmanship of the district was a serious drawback. When appointed to it by the Conference of 1856, he wrote to me, "I am *burdened* with the Chairmanship of the York District. My brethren congratulate me on what is called my elevation; but it occasions me no joy. I am too old to learn the duties of the new office. I regret that I did not begin to cultivate business habits at an earlier period of life; but I am comforted with the hope that my appointment to York is providential, and if so, I may calculate on Almighty aid. I have a good and able man in Mr. P. C. Horton, as my financial secretary. I need, and doubt not but I shall have, an interest in your daily intercessions."

Another drawback was the long rides to the country places, which to one not accustomed to the management of horses were troublesome, and sometimes dangerous.

January 19th, 1857, he writes to me:—

"I HAVE had one overturn in my gig-riding; and it might have been serious, but I mercifully escaped.

I was pitched clean out, and fell on my right shoulder and temple. The horse set off, and left me in the road in a pitchy-dark night. I was bruised in several places. My hat preserved my head. From a hole which was made in my great coat, it would appear that the horse-shoe had stamped upon it ; so that you will perceive I really had a narrow escape. Since that time I have never ridden alone, the stewards having kindly provided one to drive. When the days lengthen I shall take the reins again into my own hand ; but in the mean time I am very thankful for this arrangement. In very stormy weather I have been requested to take a close conveyance, instead of the gig, and in a few instances I have availed myself of the privilege. The friends are, indeed, very kind and considerate."

In addition to these matters, the protracted illness of one or two of his colleagues considerably increased his labours ; so that on one occasion he says, "We have found it difficult to get on." Again he says, "I think I am likely to remain here a third year. *The work is too hard for me*, but I do not see how I can refuse the earnest wishes of the people."

During his residence in York he completed a biographical account of Mrs. Pickford, of Bristol, concerning which he writes as follows :—

February 8th, 1858.—"I hope the work will be useful in stirring up believers to seek after a full salvation. Many prayers have been put up in the preparation of the manuscript. I am deeply conscious that my portion of the work is marked by great feebleness, and has nothing of originality or literary merit to recommend it ; but as my simple aim was to give the character and experience of the subject of the biography, I am at ease about my part of the matter ; and if it in any degree advance the glory of God, I shall have my reward."

CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

LEEDS, (OXFORD PLACE,) AND ROCHDALE CIRCUITS.

HAVING fulfilled his three years in the York Circuit, he bade farewell to friends who had endeared themselves by the tenderest sympathy in the season of sore trial and bereavement. His next appointment was to Leeds, Oxford Place, from whence he soon felt it his duty to send words of consolation to a friend, on the death of his eldest son.

“LEEDS, *November 19th, 1859.*

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I WAS much affected by seeing in the ‘*Watchman*’ of this week a notice of the death of your eldest son. I cannot forbear expressing my deep sympathy with you and Mrs. L. under the bereavement. Truly, ‘in the midst of life we are in death.’ No age, no position in life, no family circle, can claim exemption, and each cup of bereavement has some sad ingredient in it, the bitterness of which relations alone can know. I can easily imagine the intensity of your grief. To lose him at such an age, after he had given so many evidences of bright intelligence, amiability, and filial devotion, must be a sore trial to you all, and especially to his dear mother.

“I trust you discern that the hand which dealt the stroke is a Father’s hand, and that in the midst of your grief you are endeavouring to say, ‘The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.’ These are deep words, and the

grace of God alone can enable persons in your circumstances to adopt and utter them from the heart. They express not only resignation but gratitude and faith. '*The Lord gave.*' Yes; your child was His gift; whatever was lovely in his tempers, amiable in his disposition, or gracious in his nature towards Divine things, was the planting of God's right hand. He lent him to you that you might train him for heaven, and have your happiness increased by his society, and by watching the expansion of his intellect, and the budding of his Christian principles and virtues. '*The Lord hath taken away.*' It was not chance, nor simply disease, that took him; but God acting through and by means of disease. And He took him, not because He could not have warded off or cured the disease, but because He saw it best for him and for you,—time and eternity taken into account,—to call him home in his early youth, rather than to leave him for long years to come in a tempting and corrupting world. Believing all this, you will not fail to add, '*Blessed be the name of the Lord.*' The cup is bitter, but it is mixed with some mollifying ingredients. The loss is great, but it is all on your side. The gain to your loved one is infinite; yea, and the ultimate profit to yourselves may be such as no minor bereavement could have secured. You have in the death of your dear Arthur another tie to heaven, another antidote to the love of the world, and another call to activity and fidelity in the service of the God of your father.

"Mrs. M'OWAN unites with me in praying that you all may be comforted and sustained according to your griefs. I remain," etc.

In the spring of 1860 he went on a deputation for the Missionary Society to the Newcastle District. From North Shields he writes home:—

April 7th, 1860.—"On Wednesday I went to Shotley-Bridge in an open conveyance, a distance of fourteen miles. The morning was fine, and the country through

which we rode was interesting, and in some places picturesque. The Derwent runs through the valley, and adds greatly to the beauty of the scene; and when the trees are in leaf it must be enchanting. For the last half hour of our journey we saw the signs of a heavy storm before us; and as we neared the town it came down with great force. There was first pelting hail, and then heavy rain; the lightning was awfully vivid, and very near; and the thunder made the house in which I lodged shake throughout. By the time for the afternoon service the storm had passed over; and I preached to about eighty persons. In the evening the meeting was held. The people have lately built a beautiful chapel and schoolrooms at a cost of £1,800, for which they have subscribed the whole of the money. They have been favoured with reviving showers of grace during the last five months, and will be able to report a large increase of members.

“Next morning we started for Newcastle, and were again favoured with a view of the Derwent valley. The hills on the left were covered with patches of snow, the remnants of the storm. Lord Strathmore’s mansion stands on the hill-side, and seen across the valley has an imposing appearance.

“As we went to the chapel on the morning of Good Friday, the street was full of children from the different Dissenting and Methodist schools. They were forming in order of procession, to march to a chapel, where a sermon was to be preached to them and their teachers. Their singing was beautiful, and it was really a lovely sight. My congregation was large, the chapel being filled above and below; and I had some liberty while I testified that ‘eternal life’ is ‘the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ In the afternoon I returned to North Shields, and preached in the evening from Psalm lxxii. 17,—a theme in which I greatly delight.”

Newcastle, April 11th, 1860.—“I forgot to tell you that after preaching on Friday morning in Fawcett Street chapel, Sunderland, a well-dressed man came

into the vestry, and with many expressions of gratitude told me that he found peace with God under a sermon I preached in Lerwick chapel during my visit to Shetland. He has been twenty-one years in Sunderland, and is now walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. I was much affected by this fresh instance of the goodness and condescension of God. On parting with him another man came forward, and, giving his name, said, he had been brought to the knowledge of the truth through my preaching at Mersea, in the Colchester circuit. He introduced me to his wife, who stood by. They were full of joy to see me, and attributed their union with God and His people mainly to my ministry. At the close of the public meeting they brought to me four or five of their children. The gladness of these good people was great, and to me was most gratifying.

“The meeting at Sunderland was a hallowed season. The grand old chapel in Sans Street was crowded, and the collection was £10 above last year.”

In the end of April Mr. Wilson and his motherless children returned from Fiji. Their home was with Mr. M'OWan, at Leeds, till after Conference. Mr. Wilson, meanwhile, was employed frequently at missionary services under the direction of the Missionary Committee. But during this summer Mr. M'OWan's health gave way, and he was obliged to rest for six months, trying a change of air and scenery at York and Scarborough with little benefit. After Conference he repaired to Ilkley, with Mrs. M'OWan. Having remained there a fortnight, without any improvement in his health, they resolved on returning home. Providentially, they met, in their last walk, Mr. and Mrs. Peel, of Ackworth Park, near Pontefract, who urged him to stay, and try the hydropathic establishment. To this he reluctantly consented; but it proved

beneficial to the restoration of his health. He next writes to Mrs. M'Owan :—

Ilkley Wells, September 6th, 1860.—“To-day I think I can trace a little progress in several particulars. My baths, hitherto, have not proved formidable. What they may be in future I know not. My dread of solitude and want of suitable society has been superseded by the arrival of several visitors, with whom I have had sweet fellowship. I endeavour to eat and drink, to walk and take baths, in the spirit of prayer and thanksgiving. Mrs. Peel and her daughter left this morning. The son remains. My first week expires to-day, and Mr. Peel, Jun., *has paid the bill!* I am using all diligence, in connection with due caution, that I may profit by the singular beneficence of this kind family.

“I have not forgotten that this is the day for Chrissie’s * journey, and have prayed that God would take her and the dear children under His heavenly care and keeping. You will feel lonely; and I regret I am not with you under the circumstances. The Lord bless you!”

In introducing the letter which follows, I may state that on the evening of September 5th, as my dear wife was on her way from the chapel service at Worcester, she dropped down, and instantly expired. I had preached from 1 John ii. 28: “And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming;” and the last lines sung at the close, in which she was observed heartily to join, were,—

“Still let me, till my days are past,
At Jesu’s feet abide;
So shall He lift me up at last,
And seat me by His side.”

* Mr. Wilson being appointed for this year at home, in the service of the Missionary Committee, Miss M'Owan had gone to reside with him in London, and take care of her sister’s children.

“ILKLEY WELLS, *September 10th, 1860.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“I DID not hear of your sad bereavement until Saturday afternoon, and then too late for post. I was stunned by the intelligence, and felt more than I can express. I am sorry that my circumstances render it impossible for me to visit you in your deep distress, but at the throne of grace I have not failed to supplicate, in your behalf, help from the God of consolation. Both of us have had to mourn over the death of children, but your present loss is something beyond all previous losses; and but for the aid of your all-sufficient God it would be impossible for you to bear up under it. I hope you will be preserved from fainting, and will be enabled to look at the numerous grounds for thankfulness which the life and religious experience of the dear deceased furnish. She loved the Lord, and delighted in the prosperity of His work. His people were her friends, and whatever tended to injure His cause was to her an occasion of grief. The suddenness of her death was a trial to you, but a felicity to herself. It was more like a translation than falls to the lot of most of our Lord's followers. The text from which you preached was singularly appropriate, and the sermon, I have no doubt, was to her a word in season. I have not a Hymn-Book at hand, but guess the hymn was no less suitable for a last devotional exercise.

“You will need, my dear brother, to guard against being swallowed up of sorrow. You have neither the physical nor mental energy to sustain you, under this stroke, which you had when called to drink the cup of bereavement on former occasions. You will be tempted to pore over your loss with an intensity of grief, which, if indulged, will drink up your spirits. You have every reason to believe she has gone to be with Jesus, and it will be for your profit to think on the glory she inherits, rather than on the grave and its dark associations.

y the painful event be sanctified to us all! and

may we have grace to prepare for the hour when we also shall have to meet the last enemy!—My circumstances during the last five months have been very monitory. I know not what the end will be, only I have felt it my duty to use all likely means to effect recovery, and, should they fail, I must submit to be laid aside. I return on Thursday next, better, but far from being restored.” (He stayed another week with great advantage.) “I intend doing what work I can, and will in the spirit of faith and prayer await the issue.

“May the everlasting arms be underneath and round about you!”

He attended the Newcastle Conference of 1861. But feeling that he was not the man he had been in former days, he writes to Mrs. M'Owan:—

“I purpose being as much in the open air as possible, and do not intend to enter into the business of Conference as I used to do. I am not melancholy; but I feel that my day for active, fagging service is past. May I have grace to profit by each and all of the lessons which await me as a minister and a man in the decline of life!”

On the probability of his son going to reside in South Africa, writing to his daughter in London, he says:—

“A monthly mail will convey our mutual greetings to and fro, which will tend to allay anxiety and diminish feelings of weariness and loneliness; but with all possible facilities of communication we shall find ample occasion for the exercise of faith, patience, and resignation.” (How natural this, after the bereavement at Fiji! And this also proved a *final* parting.)

“Our family history has hitherto been marked by grace and providential interference. We have had trials and bereavements; but a review of the whole constrains us to say, ‘Goodness and mercy have

followed us all the days of our life; ' and He who has led and helped us thus far, will lead and help us to the end. Divine resources never fail; and to the faithful the promise is, ' I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' ' My grace is sufficient for thee : for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' "

We cannot withhold the following letter, sent to his son and his wife, to meet them at Plymouth, as they were departing for South Africa.

" MY DEAR CHILDREN,

" To you who have been engrossed and almost overwhelmed with the fatigue and anxieties of packing and other forms of preparation for the day of your embarkation, that day has probably appeared tardy in its approach; but we feel startled by the fact of its arrival. While you remained in Bristol," (with his wife's relations,) " we felt as if you were at home; but hearing that you were going on board breaks the dream, and awakens emotions which faith alone can sanctify and control. It is a cross that we cannot be at your side to kiss baby, and bid you *be of good cheer*. But, denied this pleasure, we avail ourselves of the privilege of committing you, one and all, to the protection and guidance of Him who measures the waters in the hollow of His hand, who holds the winds in His fist, and who maketh the stormy waves to be still. Yes, it is to us a source of the purest joy, that though the great and wide sea will soon stretch itself between us and you, yet your Father and our Father, your God and our God, is everywhere present, and will, at the call of faith, prove Himself mighty to save.

" Though for some considerable time we shall not be able to exchange the endearments of our relationship, we may have intimate intercourse at the throne of grace, and by a daily presentation of our petitions in each other's behalf we may bring down the blessing of the Lord, which maketh rich, without added sorrow.

" Thus far, Providence has paved your path. In more

than one or two instances He has made the mountain a plain ; and we are full of hope that the same loving-kindness will work on your behalf through your voyage, and during your sojourn in the land of your adoption. Our prayer is, that He that keepeth Israel, may keep you and all the ship's company, and bring you all to your desired haven in safety and peace.

“ We are very sorry to part with you ; but we believe you are going at God's call, that a great and honourable work is before you, and we will not make your hearts sad by even mentioning our regrets. Go, my dear children, in the strength of the Lord. Seek His glory, not your own. Do all in His name, and ever lay the result of your labours at His feet. May He bless you, and make you a blessing, for His name's sake ! ”

December 10th, 1861, he writes the following letter of sympathy to a friend under affliction :—

“ DEAR MISS DALBY, *

“ WE regret to hear that your affliction continues without much mitigation ; but we are glad to learn that you faint not under the chastening hand of the Lord. There are many mysteries in Providence which we cannot unravel ; but, knowing that the Lord reigneth, we rest assured that they all admit of a solution in harmony with wisdom and love. Much light is thrown on dark providences by the assurance that they are ‘ for our profit,’ that we may be ‘ partakers of His holiness.’ The glory of God, the well-being of society, and the prosperity of the Church, require that there should be pre-eminent examples of the power of the Gospel to sanctify and save to the uttermost ; but those who are in health, and who abound in the blessings of worldly prosperity, are generally so indisposed to submit to its full transforming power, that God finds it necessary to chasten them to a degree which is ‘ grievous,’ in order to make them willing to take all the gifts and

* Miss Dalby was a granddaughter of the late Joseph Entwisle, senior, and had been an invalid for several years.

graces which the Holy Spirit waits to impart. Hence it is said, 'He doth not afflict willingly,' or from His heart. By our unwillingness to take 'the mould divine' with all its heavenly lineaments in the ordinary means of grace, we lay Him under a holy necessity of bringing us into the furnace; and therefore it is said, 'Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.' By means of chastening He raises up in the souls of His suffering saints His own image and likeness, in beautiful proportions, which is the highest honour He can put upon them, and the richest token of His love which a creature can receive. We all unite in love to your dear father and mother, and in sympathetic regards to yourself. I remain," etc.

To his son, now in South Africa, he writes :—

July, 1862.—"I think I mentioned in my last letter that I had accepted a cordial invitation from the Rochdale Quarterly Meeting to be their Superintendent for next year. It is pleasing to find that after the tear and wear of forty-five years there is still an open door for us.

"My dear brother intends to retire from the itinerancy at the approaching Conference. His retirement reminds me that mine cannot be far off. At one time I contemplated this event with feelings of dread almost amounting to horror; but I cease to look upon it in that light. True, the Supernumerary ministers in our Connexion, generally, may be but lightly esteemed; but the honour which cometh from man is not essential to our happiness. There is nothing really disreputable in an old man's not being able to do the work a young minister, nor in a feeble man's being unable to do the work of his stronger brother. I have had a long, bright, and, on the whole, a happy day of public service. I have to a large extent shared the confidence of my brethren in the ministry, and have had the happiness of knowing that my poor labours have been prized by our people, being not wholly in vain in the

Lord. I love the work of the ministry, and indeed glory in it, and, while health and strength are granted, will rejoice to spend and be spent in it; but I hope to be happy when the great Master says, 'It is enough,' and bids me retire. In looking back, I see ground for infinite thankfulness, and my only regret is, that I have fallen so far short in respect of personal holiness and ministerial efficiency; but even this feeling of shortcoming makes me rejoice evermore in the merits and intercession of the blessed Jesus."

The Conference of 1862 was held in Camborne, Cornwall. In a letter from thence to his family he says:—

"We are now at the solemn question, 'Who have died during the year?' How delightful to hear such testimonies of personal holiness and of Christian triumph!

'O may I triumph so,
When all my warfare's past;
And, dying, find my latest foe
Under my feet at last!'

"We were favoured with a long ride along the Cornish cliffs last evening. The scene was grand; and, being blessed with a glorious sunset, we were really enraptured. Some of the rural scenes we passed through were pretty and interesting. One cliff down which we gazed was called, 'Hell's Mouth.' Its height is upwards of three hundred feet, and it is so perpendicular, that a stone dropped from the top falls into the dashing waves below. The heath was in full bloom, and the wild flowers gave beauty and interest to our ride."

August 7th, 1862.—"To-day we have been engaged in the work of ordination. The service at Redruth was presided over by the President and Ex-president; that at Camborne, by the Revs. John Farrar and Thomas Jackson, in which I was appointed to take part. The Charge was delivered by Mr. Jackson. It was truly wonderful. The unction which attended it

was overwhelming, and the topics it included were so various and appropriate, and so energetically illustrated and applied, that we were all ready to say, it surpassed all the Charges we had ever heard. Old and young, ministers and people, were melted into tears."

At this Conference Mr. M'Owan was appointed to the ROCHEDALE CIRCUIT, in compliance with the invitation of the Quarterly Meeting. Soon after his removal thither, his sympathies were excited by finding on investigation, that hundreds of our members were suffering extreme destitution through what has been termed, "the cotton famine." He appealed to some of his personal friends in other circuits in their behalf, and his heart was gladdened by their hearty response. Help poured in from all parts, and in all forms that could be conceived. And his wife and daughter were busy from morning to night, for months, in the pleasant labour of dispensing these gifts to the poor of Christ's flock. In reference to this work he says :—

"We thank our Heavenly Father for putting it into the hearts of His children to devise liberal things in behalf of our suffering, patient poor. Their humble gratitude makes it quite a privilege to minister to their necessities. I have always loved the poor of Christ's flock ; but my admiration of their patience, fortitude, and *nobility* of character has been greatly heightened of late. I could not bear up a week, if I were doomed to see the distress around me, without the ability in some good measure to relieve it. It has been very affecting to observe how self has been ignored by the desire to benefit loved ones at home. A mother has come requesting clothing for her little boy or sickly girl. Having had these wants supplied, she has been quite satisfied ; but on it being remarked that she herself was but thinly clad, a tale of personal destitution has been elicited so distressing as to bring tears from those

who heard it. An old woman comes to ask for warm clothing for her 'old man.' On having her wishes met, she is happy, and would depart; but on inquiry it turns out that her shoes let in water, that her only covering is the thin clean shawl on her head, and that her underclothing is wretched. In some instances articles of value have been declined on the ground that others needed them more than themselves. In other cases, all aid has been refused because the parties had three days' work a week, and others, though entirely out of work, have declined to give their names as persons in need, because their little store previously laid up was not quite exhausted. In numerous instances of great destitution we have found the 'Sunday suit' has been sacredly preserved, that attendance on the sanctuary might not be interrupted."

We may here observe, that when the time came for Mr. M'Owan to leave this circuit, many of these grateful people expressed their sorrow at parting, with tears declaring their belief that God had sent him to Rochdale; and that they could never forget his kindness to them in the time of their deep distress.

The following letter of sympathy on the death of the Rev. Thomas S. Monkhouse, was addressed to his wife.

"ROCHDALE, *December 27th*, 1862.

"DEAR MRS. MONKHOUSE,

"I HAVE had you on my mind each day since I heard of your heavy bereavement, and have been watching for a quiet half-hour to assure you how deeply Mrs. M'Owan and I sympathize with you under the stroke. I observed at Conference that your husband looked thinner than usual, but little thought that he would be taken so soon, and I left. He is the first of our ministers who has fallen a prey to the excessive labours and painful mental exercises which this

'cotton famine' has brought on, but it is feared he will not be the last. The wants of the people are so varied and so pressing, and our resources are so inadequate to meet them, that ministers of keenly sympathetic minds are in great danger of wearing themselves out by wasting efforts by day, and sleepless anxiety by night. But though his labour on behalf of the distressed may have been excessive, I have no doubt his Saviour has said, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' And the King of kings and Lord of lords, who has given him the crown laid up for those who are faithful unto death, has promised to be a Husband to you, and a Father to your fatherless children. To your eye, the future is probably dark, and you may be tempted to question whether you shall not faint by the way, and whether it be possible for you in your loneliness to bring your precious and immortal charge safe to the Canaan above. But, my dear friend, *you are not alone*, the Angel of the covenant will 'bless the lads.' His unseen hand will at once guide, defend, and sustain you, their earthly guardian and instructor. The future is as open to His eye as the past; and having removed into His own blissful presence the prop on which you lovingly leaned, He will not fail to make His strength perfect in your weakness, and His grace sufficient for you and yours. Commit, therefore, your way unto the Lord, assured that He will make darkness light before you, and crooked things straight.

"If any of your dear children have not yet given their hearts to God, I hope they will not delay this necessary and pleasant duty another hour; and then, being made the children of God by faith, they may rely on Him for a child's portion, both in time and in eternity. Their father has gained the prize, and they must not falter or loiter in the race.—Mrs. M'OWAN unites with me in sympathizing regards."

In the spring of 1863, in compliance with the wishes of the Missionary Committee in London, he

preached in Queen Street and Spitalfields chapels on the Sunday, and spoke in Exeter Hall on the Monday, in behalf of the Foreign Missions.

In attending the Conference at Bradford in 1864, he was unexpectedly requested by the President to take the pulpit at Eastbrook chapel on Sunday morning, which he felt to be a great trial. But being graciously helped in the service, he wrote home :—

“You will be glad to hear that I was not confounded before the vast congregation yesterday morning. Indeed, I ought to say, to the glory of my great Master, that I felt His presence, and was saved from the fear of man. A goodly number of ministers and people have expressed their thanks for the sermon.”

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.

BOLTON (WESLEY).

His last appointment was to the Bolton (Wesley) circuit, in 1865, to which he had been affectionately invited. September 7th, he informs me :—

“We have had a fair share of visitors to bid us welcome, and all aver that they are glad to see us among them. From conversation with friends, and the brief opportunities I have had for observation, it is manifest that we need, as all circuits and congregations do, a richer baptism of the Holy Spirit : and this we shall obtain, if we seek it in due order. May the great Master of Assemblies make us willing in this the day of His power !

“For all the kindnesses of friends, whether in Rochdale or in Bolton, I hope I am unfeignedly thankful, but I am not elated. I have a great work before me, and a heavy burden to bear ; and I never felt my insufficiency for both one and the other more than at present. I must seek and obtain closer communion with Him who is the great Source of wisdom, power, and love. I earnestly solicit your prayers on my behalf, that I may have grace to ‘spend my life’s short day obedient to His will.’

“I have heard pleasing testimonies as to the usefulness of the sermons you preached when you were here a short time since. The evening sermon especially has been referred to as a season of power from on high.*

* Previous to its division, I had laboured in the Bolton circuit from 1827 to 1830, and from 1848 to 1851, and had recently visited the pleasing scenes of my former labours.

His love to the cause of missions never declined; but his physical powers for active service abated. His last missionary deputation was to the Halifax and Bradford District in 1866-7, where, as he writes home, he was cheered by pleasing references to the spiritual good received by many from sermons he had preached in Halifax on a former visit. He was invited to take part in the services of the Anniversary of the parent Society, in May, 1867; and as this was his last attendance on these occasions, we take leave to give an extract from his speech at the General Meeting in Exeter-Hall, which, though not one of his most eloquent and powerful appeals, is yet strongly expressive of his undying zeal in that glorious cause. The Lord Mayor of London was in the Chair. We copy from the "Missionary Notices" of the date.

"MY LORD MAYOR,—I thought, while listening to your speech, of the words of the prophet: 'The saints shall take the kingdom.'.....I feel strong this day in the belief that the work in which we are engaged is in a high and pre-eminent manner the work of God. Whether I look at the great commission under which we act, the character of the men we employ, the doctrines which our missionaries preach, the spirit in which the affairs of this great Society are carried on, or the grand results which we have had placed before us this day, I say, the Society bears the image and superscription of the King eternal, immortal, invisible. It is manifest that God blesses man by means of man, and it is equally apparent that just in proportion as we enter into this part of the Divine design, and carry it out, in the same proportion He blesses us. 'He that watereth shall be watered also himself.' 'Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.' This is one of the great principles on which the Divine government of

our race is based ; and I must, as an old friend of this Society, say that I have found missionary labour and missionary sacrifice a means of grace to myself. I have had my views of prophecy brightened and strengthened, my faith in the divinity of our holy religion and in the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures strengthened, by reading the documents published by your Society, as well as by other Missionary Societies. I must testify, also, that I have found intimate connection with this great work a means of grace in the training of my family. I cannot imagine anything more calculated to induce our children to give themselves to God and His people, than teaching them to give, to pray, and to labour in behalf of the great missionary cause. And further, my Lord, I will say, that I have always found zeal and benevolence in behalf of this cause on the part of our people, a means of grace to those circuits which have been placed under my care.

“I am firmly persuaded that we, as a religious community, have received in remunerative goodness from God tenfold more than we have sacrificed in supporting this cause. Who can doubt that the talents of our ministers, at home and abroad, have been developed, that their learning has been made more expansive and varied, that their eloquence has been more persuasive and powerful, and their usefulness greater, than if they had not zealously engaged in this work ? If, therefore, we prize a talented, and large-hearted, and devout and useful ministry, let us one and all encourage the great missionary undertaking. Who can doubt but that we, as a religious community, have had the missionary spirit, the aggressive spirit, which has distinguished Methodism from the beginning, nourished and strengthened by means of the deep interest we have taken in this great cause ? And I conceive that this is a blessing worth ten times more than all the money we have expended in the missionary enterprise ; for I hold, that the Church which sits down contented with its beautiful places of worship, its talented ministry, and its home privileges, in forgetfulness of the perishing world, has

ignored the great commission upon which it and all Christian Churches have been raised up : but in proportion as we keep up the spirit of evangelic aggression, aiming at the conversion of the world, the Saviour of the world will take delight in blessing us.....I believe we shall yet learn more fully than we have ever done that we are not our own, that our wealth is not our own, that we are mere stewards, and that we ought to feel far more deeply than we have yet done, that a steward must be found faithful. O, if we would secure the smile and blessing of the Most High, we must throw ourselves, body and soul, time, talents, wealth, influence, learning, all we have and are, into the work of God ! Let us stand by His work, and He will stand by us. If we wish our Queen to be blessed, our country to be blessed, the Churches at home to be blessed, let us more munificently, more prayerfully, more laboriously care for the conversion of a lost world, for which Christ has died. I count it a high honour to have had an opportunity of speaking a word in this behalf in my old age."

On his arrival in Bolton he gave himself to earnest prayer, especially for the young people belonging to the various families attending the chapels, and for the Sunday-schools ; nor is it too much to believe that these special intercessions contributed, in no small degree, to the subsequent prosperity of the circuit, as a large proportion of the converts were in the flower of their youth.

One of his colleagues furnishes the greater part of the following account of the commencement of this revival.

"The 'Lord of the harvest' gladdened the heart of His aged servant by crowning the last years of his public labours by a rich and wide-spread outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the circuit. It commenced in

the autumn of 1867 by the conversion and entire consecration to God of two young men of education and social position, who also were intimate friends; the one, after a sermon preached by the Rev. Robert Eardley, in Wesley Chapel, Bolton; the other in Belfast, on the same Sunday evening, under a discourse by the Rev. W. Arthur. Prior to this gathering of the first fruits, there had been a deepening seriousness in the Sunday-school for several weeks; and ere long this developed into decided penitence, in answer to the earnest, secret prayers of the teachers, which had been daily presented at the throne of grace for some time.

"Often, during the Bible-lessons, a sacred feeling so pervaded the classes, that the young people began to weep, the books had to be closed, and teaching gave place to prayer. Scores of them were gathered in the vestry, pleading with God, many of whom found peace by believing in Jesus. It was no unusual thing for ten, twenty, and upwards, to profess to find peace with God in one afternoon; and some of these young converts were made the means of awakening their relatives. One little girl returned from school in great distress, and, crying, said to her ungodly mother, 'Mother, the Lord has saved every girl in my class, except me, and He will not have me!' This went like a dagger to the mother's heart, and she thought, 'Alas for me, then!' but concealing her emotions, she encouraged the child to pray on, 'and perhaps He would listen, and save her too.' The girl found peace the following Sunday, and went home with a face full of smiles, exclaiming, 'O mother, I am so strangely happy about my heart!' I hardly know what to do.' The mother also sought Jesus, and soon found rest for her soul. The drunken father, arrested by the Holy Spirit, was unwilling to yield, and on one occasion, as he tried to rush out of the house, when prayer was about to be offered, was prevented by his wife clinging to him, and begging him to stay. He, too, is converted to God.

"When the revival began, there was not one of the

‘school choir’ serious ; but it did not continue long before they were all converted. When some of these singers had experienced a change of heart, they united with others in earnest prayer for the conversion of the rest. Their plan was to meet together half an hour before the general prayer-meeting, and fix upon the persons to be specially remembered. For these they persevered in prayer, week after week, until there was strong proof that their names were written in the Book of Life. This they continued, until all enjoyed like precious faith.

“But this gracious work soon spread to the congregation, and many were led to seek the Lord with their whole heart. Among them was one who had been unfaithful to his Saviour, and had fallen into sin. One evening he was in an agony of distress, and wrestled with the Lord in such words as these, ‘It is not the fear of hell that urges me, Lord ; but O, I have wronged Thee : I have wronged Thee !’ He declared he dared not, would not, leave that spot, if morning dawned before liberty came, even though he should die in the place. He prevailed : the captive was set free, and his wife was brought to God a few days afterwards.

“Rapidly the work spread to the surrounding villages, and it was no unusual thing for nine or ten to obtain mercy the same evening. The Lord showed that He is not confined to time or place in saving souls. He visited and saved those who sought Him in the factory, at the family altar, in the family pew, or when at the prayer-meeting they made a more free confession of their need of salvation.”

The following communications respecting Mr. M’Owan’s manner of life in this circuit exhibit his devotional spirit, his management of circuit affairs, his conduct towards his colleagues, and the success which crowned their united labours, better than any general narrative that might be constructed from them, or from his own letters, during this period.

These testimonies may also be regarded as justly applicable to his conduct as Superintendent, or as co-pastor throughout his ministerial life.

Mr. William Walker, now of Lytham, but who has been for nearly half a century one of the most useful and judicious supporters of Methodism in Bolton, writes as follows :—

“In the year 1865, the Rev. Peter M'Owan was appointed to Wesley circuit, Bolton. It was just after the period when that Society had been greatly diminished, in consequence of the distress produced by the cotton famine. Like his excellent predecessor, Mr. Wilson, he threw all his sympathies into the labours and anxieties which that great trial occasioned, and especially did he try to arrest the downward tendency in the numbers of the Church which had been going on for some time previously. Every effort which earnest zeal could suggest was put forth, and his pulpit labours at this time evinced the depth of feeling which wrought within him. Some of his appeals which he addressed to the congregation at Wesley Chapel will not be forgotten. In the opinion of the writer, they were equal in power and pathos to sermons he had heard him preach forty years before. Such labour was not in vain in the Lord. ‘The Lord of the harvest’ richly honoured and rewarded the ‘labourer’ whom He had sent. An awakening commenced among the people. The prayer-meetings, which had become feeble, were well attended; the work of conversion began, and a most extensive revival took place, both in the town, and some of the country Societies; so that in the latter two years of his ministry there were nearly three hundred persons added to the Society; also, a vastly increased number who were admitted on trial.

“His invitation to remain a third year (the fifty-first of his ministry) was tendered to him at the time when this blessed work of God was going on in its greatest power. Some, who knew the effect which

his labours and great fervour were producing, and also the nature of the disease which had already made inroads on his physical powers, feared the consequences of his continuance in the full work. On the other hand, it seemed desirable to retain so useful and successful a ministry, rich as it was felt to be, especially to those who could appreciate its exalted spirituality. He, however, was not at all apprehensive of personal danger, and being solicited, he consented to remain. But the fulfilment of this engagement was felt to be a heavy task.

“It was not in him to abate one jot of labour whilst it was in any degree possible to perform his regular share of the work. The writer well remembers one occasion, when, on meeting him in the vestry previous to a Sabbath-evening service, and perceiving his apparent feebleness, he ventured to suggest that he should spare himself, and abridge the service a little. With great tenderness, yet equal firmness, he said, ‘Brother —, I never went into the pulpit resolved to preach a short sermon.’ With him ‘labour was rest.’ It seemed as if he could always say,

‘Ready for all Thy perfect will,
My acts of faith and love repeat,
Till death Thy endless mercies seal,
And make the sacrifice complete.’

“By brief intervals of rest and change of air, he was able to hold on till the Conference of 1868. Great feebleness and prostration of strength ensued, and he was not afterwards able to undertake any pulpit service.

“His power in prayer was very remarkable, especially that of intercession for others. He frequently urged this upon the Society, stating that in his own experience he had made the conversion of particular individuals a subject of constant prayer, and how in several instances he had obtained the desire of his heart. On the occasion of receiving the thanks of the Quarterly Meeting previous to his leaving the circuit, one of the circuit-stewards observed, that he had no doubt they

might in a great degree attribute to the prayers of their beloved pastor the rich outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the circuit; in acknowledging the vote, he said, 'I take no praise to myself, but I can appeal to my God, and also state before you, that many a midnight hour has witnessed my pleading and wrestling with Him for a blessing on my labours.' "

The Rev. J. D. Tetley writes :—" Mr. M'OWAN impressed me as living much in the spirit of prayer. I had, in common with hundreds of others, heard him pour out his soul in those memorable pleadings at the Conference, and had heard of his power in prayer : but when I became his colleague, I soon discovered the secret to be a cherished and unbroken communion with God. Hence, probably, the detail and minuteness of statement in his prayers in our weekly preachers' meetings, and in the family circle. In one of his letters he says, that his heart was drawn out concerning the Grove and Kingswood Schools," (where the sons of the ministers are educated,) " and begs me to join him in daily prayer for them. It was a common remark, if the success desired did not attend some Christian effort, ' Ah ! it is to be feared there has not been sufficient self-denying prayer. We must have more prayer—more prayer.'

" He had a tender heart, and deeply sympathized with the sick, especially the aged and poor. In some cases he took a special interest, and watched with anxious and affecting constancy. He has often said to me, ' When I " sit down," I intend to pay special attention to the aged and infirm members of Society, who are deprived of the benefits of public worship and social Christian fellowship.' This tenderness of heart showed itself in forbearance towards the drooping and wavering in the Christian life. He had a holy jealousy for the honour of God and the purity of the Church. His whole soul would rise against anything like manifest hypocrisy and clear acts of sin ; but if doubt was expressed as to the desirableness of retaining some who

were evincing coldheartedness in spiritual exercises, Mr. M'Owan was particularly careful that every effort should be made to conserve such to Christ and His Church. He would say, 'Well, I will go, and seek an interview with such a person.'

"The work of making up the quarterly record, after the visitation of the classes, was no mere routine. It was a solemn and painstaking exercise. He aimed at making all our discipline and arrangements promotive of the highest interests of souls.

"His persistence in attending to all his appointments on the circuit-plan, and manifold other duties of his office, was most striking. He regarded them as most obligatory; never taking into account the state of the weather, distance, difficulty of reaching places, inconveniencies of time, or even, as we his colleagues used to press upon him, the state of his health. He loved the work, and dearly loved to preach; and when, towards the close of his third year at Bolton, his health was so shaken as to enforce cessation for a few weeks from his beloved employ, he felt it to be a very heavy trial. He was most self-forgotten. He had the heroism of a Trojan, pervaded and ennobled by love to Christ. It was indeed a fine sight to behold the veteran stand by the numerous and onerous responsibilities of circuit-work to the very last. It is to be feared that thereby he shortened his days of useful repose.

"It was a great honour and privilege to be associated with our venerated friend in the closing year of his active ministry. He had habitually exalted views of the all-sufficiency of the priestly character of the Divine Redeemer for meeting every need and desire of the believing soul; and he often in quiet moments let out his heart to me on this theme; and would, to my intense enjoyment, refer to the vast good he had derived from conversations with Richard Watson and Theophilus Lessey on this their favourite topic.

"I may just add, that Mr. M'Owan was deeply venerated by the worthy friends of the Bolton (Wesley)

circuit, who look upon his residence and labours there as forming a distinguished page in its history."

In concise but comprehensive terms another of his Bolton colleagues, the Rev. Joseph Bush, writes:—

"WITHOUT at all dwelling on them, I may mention as excellencies in the character of Mr. M'OWAN, first of all, loyalty to Christ, firm and unflinching; then, a supreme regard for the very highest ends of Church organization; then, a wakeful interest in the religious condition of the families of our people. To this, I am bound to add, a practical deference to the opinions of his colleagues. He was wont, not only to invite our judgment in circuit matters, but to act upon it. When difficulties arose, I ever found him cautious in deciding what course to take; but equally firm in carrying out his decision.

"The year I spent with him in Bolton is a pleasant memory; and it was, at the time, a real joy to be of any service to him as the Superintendent: that I was able, though only for one year, to lighten a little the labour and anxiety of so venerable a minister in his last circuit, is still a grateful recollection."

The Rev. Robert Eardley, who laboured with him in his last two circuits, gives similar testimony:—

"IN Mr. M'OWAN nothing was to me more remarkable than his humility, and a total freedom from the envy which sometimes mars a superior man. If any worthy work had been done by any colleague, he was all exultation; and every inferior consideration seemed lost in the accomplishment; whilst he blessed the instrument and the great Agent. He never, under any pretence, paraded his own doings. One had sometimes to hear with increased admiration, as a turn in the conversation elicited it, the narrative, by the lips of another, of some good which God had wrought by him, whilst he, all demonstrative as he was, remained quite reticent, and only showed his emotion by the muscles of his face, or the welling up of tears."

Though still performing his regular duties, he was far from well when he went to Bolton. A serious disease had begun to affect his constitution, which could not be checked in its slow but steady progress. His kind friend, Mr. W. Walker, each summer drew him off for a season from his labours, to enjoy a change of air and scenery. This was a rest, but not a restoration ; and as the third year advanced, he became persuaded it must be the last of his public ministry.

The Conference of 1868 was held in Liverpool. In attending its sittings he felt himself unable to undertake some important services which were allotted to him ; especially to preside at the meeting held for the reception of returned missionaries.

During a conversation, in one of the sittings, on the general state of the work of God in the Connexion, being requested by the President to speak, he gave expression to his strong and unalterable attachment to Methodism as a most efficient and powerful form of Christianity ; and to his persuasion that with fidelity and zeal in maintaining and extending its doctrines, discipline, and institutions, it was destined by the great Head of the Church to be more than ever a blessing to the world.

On the subject of his becoming a Supernumerary, the Conference was pleased to go out of its ordinary course, and to express its sentiments in the following record, which we extract from the printed Minutes :—

“RETIREMENT OF THE REV. PETER M'OWAN.

“THE REV. PETER M'OWAN having this year retired from active service, the Conference places on record its sentiments with reference to his long and honourable career. As a minister in this Connexion for a period of

fifty-one years he has laboured with distinguished acceptance and usefulness ; preaching ' the glorious Gospel of the blessed God ' with eloquence, fervour, and success ; securing the confidence and affection of his brethren, and setting an example to the believers ' in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.' As the Superintendent of many of our most important circuits, he has ably discharged his onerous duties, and maintained our discipline in times of perplexity and peril, with exemplary fidelity and zeal. The Conference earnestly prays that the closing years of his life may be eminently peaceful and happy."

He was deeply affected with this expression of esteem from such an assembly of Christian ministers. He regarded it a higher honour than any the world could bestow. He felt his unworthiness, and gave all the glory to God his Saviour, who had led him all the way, and who had brought his public life and labours to such a happy conclusion.

Having resolved to spend the remainder of his days in Bristol, soon after the Conference Mrs. and Miss M'OWAN repaired to that city, to prepare a residence for the family. On account of a severe cold which he had caught, he was unfit for pulpit work, but remained with one of his friends in Bolton until he had completed his other duties in that circuit. Before his departure he received a substantial proof of the esteem and affection which they felt for their aged minister. And then, after a short stay with us in Bowdon Vale, my daughter and I took what proved to be our last farewell, as he went off by the train from Manchester to join his family in Bristol.

On his arrival there his wife and daughter were very much affected with the change for the worse in his personal appearance, which had taken place in the short time since they left him.

CHAPTER SEVENTEENTH.

BRISTOL.

THE LABOURER CALLED TO HIS REST.

It will be recollected by the reader that, previous to his retirement from active service in the cause of his Lord, he had remarked in a letter to his son, "I hope to be happy when the great Master says, 'It is enough,' and bids me retire." What follows will show how he submitted to the Divine will when completely laid aside from his beloved employment.

September 26th, 1868, he writes to me:—"We have been kindly and cordially received by the friends. Rich and poor, young and old, profess to be glad that we have settled among them. We find ourselves in the midst of a colony of Methodists; and, though the state of my voice and cough prevent me from preaching, I see a promising field of usefulness in the form of pastoral visitation, should God give me health to enter upon it. I have already done a little in this way to my own profit, and I hope to the profit of others.

"Our house is pleasantly situated. In five minutes we can get into a long avenue of aged elms, each measuring from four to five yards in circumference. They are the very trees under which Charles Wesley walked, and no doubt composed many of his hymns. At the head of the avenue, but separated from it by a lane, stands the mansion which Mr. Ireland, the early friend of Mr. Fletcher, occupied. We are also within twenty minutes' walk of Durdham Down, where we may wander at will, and are generally sure of a

refreshing breeze. Indeed, the whole country round is more than beautiful, it is picturesque.

"But I must stop, otherwise you will think we are disposed to rest in creature enjoyments; but this is not the case. For myself I never felt more strongly the necessity of living by faith, and of having the blood of the covenant momentarily applied to my heart and conscience. I can place no reliance on my past life or labours, and am led constantly to urge the old plea,—

‘I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.’”

At rest now from the cares and labours of his public life, early times rise up in his memory. To the Rev. Richard Heape, his first pastor, from whom he received correct and scriptural views of “free grace,” and the privileges of God’s people, he writes:—

“November 30th, 1868.

“MY DEAR MR. HEAPE,

“I HAVE had you much on my mind of late, especially in the night season. I never can forget my obligation to you as the chosen instrument whom God employed in bringing me to embrace the doctrines, and to enjoy the fellowship, of Methodism: and I am very wishful to know how you and Mrs. Heape are getting on under the increasing infirmities of age. I should be sorry to burden you by asking for a long letter, but a line or two, saying how you both are, will much oblige me.

“I find I did not give up the regular work of the ministry a day too soon. My health and voice have suffered a great and rapid change for the worse, yet I have much ground for thankfulness.

“We have received a very cordial welcome from the Bristol friends, many of whom are the children of parents now in heaven, and with whom I was intimate. Our house is comfortable, the locality is very pleasant,

and we are in the midst of Methodist neighbours. Being unable to preach, through an irritable cough, I try to make myself useful in visiting the sick, etc. The ministers of the circuit are kind and respectful; and, I am happy to say, souls are being saved from week to week.

“My eyesight, I am thankful also to state, continues good. I can read in the day-time without glasses, and without painful effort. I feel, however, that I am an old man compassed about with infirmities. I never felt more impressively my need of the infinite Saviour, of His infinite Atonement, and prevalent Intercession. I rejoice that He does not cast off or forget His old servants when their strength fails. I will thank you to remember me at the throne of grace, that I may in age, as in youth, glorify His great name. My wife and daughter unite with me in kindest regards to yourself and Mrs. Heape.

“I remain, my dear Sir,

“Your ever-indebted friend and brother.”

His affections also still lingered on Bolton. To keep himself informed concerning its affairs he wrote to Mr. Charles Jackson, who with several others had set their hearts upon the improvement of the little Society of Tongfold, in the neighbourhood, and after zealous and praiseworthy efforts, by the blessing of God, were gladdened with considerable success. To these matters the following extracts particularly refer:—

“*September 18th, 1868.*

“MY DEAR CHARLES,

“I AM happy to say that my health is somewhat improved; but perfect soundness at my time of life is not to be expected. May the infirmities of age be sanctified so as to promote my meetness for the rest which remaineth for the people of God; and may I have grace to improve the more limited field of usefulness still open to me!

"I write specially to know concerning the health of your dear father. I hope he is delivered from the severe pain to which he was subject at the time I left Bolton. I will thank you also to inform me how the services at the opening of the new chapel went off. What was their character, and what their results, as far as can be ascertained ?

"I have to thank you and your father's family for many substantial favours while I lived in your neighbourhood; and though now distant, I venture to ask another, namely, that you will forward to my address *your copy* of the 'Bolton Chronicle,' or 'Guardian,' when you have done with it. I am aware that in asking this favour I am subjecting you to a weekly tax; but I know you love me, and as I wish to cherish the remembrance of Bolton, and the many, *many* dear friends I left there, I cannot doubt but you will take pleasure in meeting our joint wishes, for our entire family unite in the request."

November 26th.—"I rejoice greatly to hear of the success with which the erection of Tongfold chapel has been crowned. That little cause, however, must be carefully nursed, and diligently superintended; otherwise, it will decline. It has required a great deal of self-denying labour on your part, and the part of others, to bring it to what it is, and still it will require prudent and painstaking oversight. I am also delighted to hear good accounts from Grecian Street neighbourhood. The harvest there has been great. To God be all the glory! Here also, blessed be His name! the work of God prospers."

June 22nd, 1869.—"I sympathize with you and all the friends who take an interest in the prosperity of the school at Tongfold, under the heavy loss they have sustained in the deaths of Pollitt and Proctor. The little cause there can ill spare any of its willing workmen; and yet I shall not be surprised if their death be overruled by the calling out of other workers, who have hitherto been kept in the background. Charles

Wesley's words are still true: 'The Master buries His workmen, but carries on His work.' I trust and pray they may receive a new illustration in this afflictive event.....I am at a loss to express my sense of your kindness in sending 'the Chronicle' with such punctuality. I wish to keep up my acquaintance with Bolton and its local and religious interests; but I should be sorry to impose on you the task of continuing to send the newspaper weekly. We shall still be glad to receive it, only henceforth let it be only occasionally.

"I hope your brother Arthur still delights to study the Holy Scriptures, and that the great Head of the Church makes him useful in the conversion of sinners, and in edifying believers. Tell him from me to exalt Jesus, to rely on the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, and to look for fruit from every sermon. I often remember you all at the throne of grace, and shall always account it a favour to receive a few lines to know how you are, and how the schools prosper. I will thank you to remember me kindly to the superintendent of your school. We all unite in kind regards to your parents, to Miss Jackson, yourself, Mr. Arthur, and all the family."

Again he writes to me, February 18th, 1869:—"We are all, thanks be to God, able to move about, and have many grounds for gratitude. The winter so far has been remarkably mild. In fact, we are already surrounded with signs of spring: not only are the early flowers out, but the almond trees are in full bloom, and the buds of other trees are ready to burst out. Such a winter I never remember, and to me it has been a dispensation of mercy. That we shall have no severe weather is, perhaps, more than we can expect; but hitherto the wind has been tempered to the shorn lamb. There have been but few days on which I have not been able to take out-door exercise, more or less. I keep up my visits to the sick, etc., but I have not attempted to preach.

"The work of God in the circuit advances. From Kingswood we hear of revival-meetings, issuing in the conversion of sinners; and in the City-Road circuit, London, there is a good work in progress. On some occasions they are said to have a thousand people at a prayer-meeting. We had a letter from Mr. Wilson, Glasgow, the other day: the work of God prospers also in his circuit, and our grandchildren are doing well.

"When confined to the house, I have been occupying myself in preparing a series of papers on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. I have long had an impression that many of our people need instruction concerning that ordinance. Whether I shall be able to complete my design is doubtful. While plodding at the work, I have often regretted that we are so far separated, feeling my need of light and of counsel. The thing may prove an abortion, but the labour is profitable to myself."

April 15th, 1869.—"I dare say you have been surprised at not hearing from me for so long a time, and you will be sorry to hear that I have been very unwell. I was far from being strong when I last wrote, but was in daily hope of getting better. That hope, however, proved groundless. The doctor had to be called in; and ever since I have been under medical treatment. The worst symptoms are now mitigated, but I am still feeble, and unfit for any kind of service. The friends have been kind and sympathizing, and I have found the vast benefit of union with Jesus, and of having in Him a claim on the covenant promises. May the design of the affliction be fully answered! My dear Jane has also been laid up by a complaint which for some weeks excited our anxiety. But we hope she is now cured."

April 26th.—"I am happy to be able to allay your solicitude on my account. Though far from well, I am much better. My medical adviser exhorts me to live well, and be much in the open air. Respecting my internal complaint, he gives me no hope of final cure, but says, 'Though painful, it is not immediately

dangerous.' My dear Jane is also better ; meanwhile, Chrissie continues to be the stay of the family. It is humbling to be under the necessity of thinking so much about the body, and one's self ; but it is comforting to know that the Lord remembers ' we are dust,' and that He ' knoweth our frame.'

"I mentioned before that the sympathy of our friends had been a source of comfort. A little girl, a daughter of Mr. Toyne's," (one of the ministers,) "about three years old, tapped at her mother's chamber-door one day last week, and, being asked what she wanted, said, 'I want to pray.' Her mother replied, 'Well, kneel down there, and pray.' The child went to a corner of the room, knelt down, and, clasping her hands, said, 'Please, dear Lord, make dear Mr. M'Owan well!' and rose from her knees assured I should get better.

"One of our friends has lately entered upon the possession of a new house, with a large garden and vinery. In one of the sections of the vinery there were some early grapes, which were of course tempting to the juvenile members of the family ; but all of them, young and old, agreed that 'Father M'Owan' should have the first ripe fruits, which were politely presented by the eldest daughter. These are little things, but to me, in my invalid state, they are touching. It is a great privilege to have a place in the hearts and prayers of God's people ; and especially to be assured that we are always remembered by our great High Priest before the throne above."

What reader does not feel constrained to pray that the Saviour's blessing may ever be the portion of the dear children mentioned above, who showed such affection for the aged and afflicted minister ?

As the spring of 1869 advanced, fears were aroused respecting the health of Mrs. M'Owan. From 1862 her health had been declining ; but her spirits were so good, that she would seldom consent to be considered

an invalid. During the winter of 1868 she endured much pain; but now she could no longer conceal her sufferings from those she loved.—“Calm, and unmoved,” her daughter writes, “she heard the doctor’s opinion, that hopes of her ultimate recovery could not be realized. After a pause, she said, ‘It is all right, *all right*; God has ordered it well.’ With the greatest composure she told us what arrangements she wished to be made when she was ‘gone,’ and on concluding her last request her mind seemed greatly relieved, and she said, ‘That is done; now I have finished with this world.’”

July 19th, Mr. M’Owan writes:—“The proverb, ‘No news is good news,’ does not always hold true. Had I written on the receipt of your last, I must have written in gloom. Besides the continued illness of my dear Jane, I was suffering with a swollen and inflamed leg. It is now better, but I am still lame, and my whole system is in a feverish heat. My dear wife is the subject of constant pain, and she sleeps only by the use of opiates. Thus, the evening of life, instead of being calm, and full of sunshine, as we had fondly dreamed it would be, is overcast with clouds. To us, wearisome days and nights are appointed. But we see the bow spanning the clouds, and we know that ‘whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.’ We are trying to cast our care upon Him, assured that He careth for us. It is ground of regret that we are so far apart, and thus unable to render the personal attentions to each other which love would dictate; but I know you do not forget us at the throne of grace, pleading yet more earnestly that we may have the furnace cooled, and that meantime we may glorify God in the fires.

“Have you Collins’s Life, by Coley? If not, get it as soon as you can.

“Nature is in a glow of beauty all around. The friends furnish us with fruits and flowers of the most delicious and beautiful kinds.

"I rejoice in the prosperity of your circuit. We are not making so much way here.

"I am afraid the friends of the Papacy will outwit us all. How pitiful to find Protestant bishops pleading for the concurrent endowment of Popery! I hope the nation will rouse to action, and that we shall lead the van. Writing is difficult, so I must conclude."

September 10th.—"Knowing the value of your advocacy at the throne of grace, I am concerned that you should be informed of the growing weakness of our dear invalid. She is now confined to her bed, and cannot turn herself without help. On Monday last she was seized with a shivering fit, which we feared would issue in death, but by means of stimulants she revived. Yesterday, again, for an hour, she was in extreme agony and danger. Without enlarging, you will perceive that the life of my dear Jane hangs in doubt from day to day.

"I am happy to inform you that grace is given according to our day. No murmuring or repining word has escaped the lips of the dear sufferer. Indeed, she exhibits a pattern of perfect patience and entire resignation. Her mind is unclouded, and her concern for our comfort is most affecting. All this is the result of trust in Jesus. On this point her experience is more clear and explicit than when I last wrote. The friends are kind beyond expression."

On this mournful subject Miss M'Owan proceeds:—"Though aware that death was near, her heart's language was, 'Not my will, but Thine be done.' Even when in great agony, her strongest expression was, 'O what shall I do?' But this was soon turned into prayer: 'Lord, help me, help me!' Her favourite text was John iii. 16: 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Once, on hearing it, she remarked, 'That little word "so" has a wonderful amount of meaning in it. We cannot tell ALL it means;' and for some time she seemed lost in the thought. At another time

when the passage was repeated, she went over the words, 'Everlasting life,' slowly and solemnly, and added, 'For me—even me—POOR ME!'

"During the last afternoon I read to her Dr. Bonar's hymn, 'The Inner Calm,' which she greatly enjoyed. It seemed so suitable to her case, as it was then [difficult] for her to stay her mind on one subject for any length of time. The verses that pleased her most were,—

'Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
While these hot breezes blow;
Be like the night dews' cooling balm
Upon earth's fever'd brow.

'Calm me my God, and keep me calm,
Soft resting on Thy breast;
Soothe me with holy hymn and psalm,
And bid my spirit rest.'

And when she felt her mind beginning to wander, she would whisper, 'Calm me, calm me!'

"Towards five o'clock, when Mr. M'Owan came into the room, she roused herself, and held out her hand. And when he stepped to the bedside, she took hold of his hand, and gazed lovingly and earnestly in his face. I left the room to prepare something for her, and, on returning, found that she still had hold of it; but immediately, on seeing me, she ungrasped his hand, and pressed mine for some minutes. This was her last farewell to us, though at the moment we knew it not. She uttered no word, but her face spoke volumes. It was a solemn time.

"Her breathing continued laborious until about a quarter of an hour before her departure. Then it became quite natural, and gradually sank to that of a sleeping infant. Once she opened her eyes, gazed earnestly upwards, with all the appearance of recognizing some loved ones, ready to welcome her heavenward, whilst a holy, peaceful expression lighted up her

countenance. She then closed her eyes again, and gently passed from earth to heaven about nine o'clock, September 16th, 1869.

“Mr. M'Owan, whilst impressing a kiss on her lips, repeated the following lines:—

‘Ah, lovely appearance of death !
What sight upon earth is so fair ?
Not all the gay pageants that breathe
Can with a dead body compare :
With solemn delight I survey
The corpse, when the spirit is fled,
In love with the beautiful clay,
And longing to lie in its stead.’

“During the first three weeks after his heavy bereavement, my dear father was wonderfully supported, and his own health seemed somewhat improved ; but the reaction came afterwards, and it was thought advisable that he should leave home for a little. Just at this time he received and accepted an urgent invitation from a much-valued friend in London, who spared no pains to promote his comfort and health during his stay of several weeks. He returned home in better spirits, and slightly improved in health.”

November 18th he writes :—

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“CHRISIE's letter, by which you were informed of my visit to London, I dare say surprised you. But the infirm state of my health, consequent on my bereavement, was such as rendered a change of scene, etc., necessary. Mrs. W. M. Bunting by some means heard of my declining strength, and sent me such a pressing invitation that, though I dreaded so long a journey, I felt that I could not refuse. I was mercifully preserved and strengthened both in going and returning ; and my sojourn under Mrs. Bunting's friendly roof was a blessing every way. Since my return some of my old symptoms have revived ; but I

am, on the whole, better, and am able to resume my visits among our friends, on a 'limited scale.' "

Of the visit just mentioned, Mrs. Bunting says:—"We shall never cease to be thankful for the honour conferred upon us by his acceptance of my invitation. It was a season of affectionate intercourse, the recollection of which is most pleasant. His characteristic urbanity, despite the languor and restlessness of disease, as well as the frequent attacks of severe pain, never forsook him; and the gratitude he expressed for every little attention was most affecting.....I need not say, that he was the same saintly and spiritually-minded man we had always known him to be. Not seldom did he remind us of the Peter M'Owan of bygone days. His hatred of sin in all its forms was as strong as ever, and so was his love of Christ."

Miss M'Owan again observes:—"Before the winter had elapsed it was apparent that he was sinking, and that while the outward man perished, the inward man was renewed day by day. The calm serenity with which he endured pain, his entire resignation to the Divine will, his childlike reliance on his Saviour, and his grateful spirit, all showed that patience had its perfect work, and that he was ripening for heaven.

"Even when weakness was extreme he would visit some invalid, to pray and minister consolation, though the effort produced great exhaustion on his return."

We now introduce the last letter received from him; the last of an unbroken and truly fraternal correspondence continued through a period of fifty-four years. It is highly characteristic; the Christian spirit breathing throughout. As usual, it is comprehensive in its topics. It is given almost entire.

“ BRISTOL, *December 29th*, 1869.

“ MY DEAR BROTHER,

“ THOUGH the exercise of writing is to me both difficult and irksome, I cannot allow the year to close without congratulating you and dear Eliza on the comparative health you have enjoyed during its successive months, and expressing a hope that you will be equally favoured in the year on which we are about to enter. The past has been to us a year of loss and bereavement; but we also have many grounds for gratitude and thankfulness. The rapidity with which the malady of the dear deceased developed, wasting her strength daily, was a trial at the time, but the severity of the attack, as we now see, shortened the period of her suffering; and, as respects the spirit and manner in which she met the last enemy, grace abounded. The sympathy of our Christian friends, also, calls for songs of praise, while the consolations of the Holy Spirit have not been withheld. May we reap all the fruits of righteousness intended by the chastening with which our covenant God has been pleased to visit us!

“ By recent letters from Africa, we learn that one of our Peter's children has been at the gates of death, but was mercifully spared, after being given up by the doctor; and that he himself was poorly, having been exposed to heavy rains. There is a fly in almost every pot of ointment. No family is without trials.

“ Methodism in Liverpool has sustained a great loss in the death of Mr. Farnworth. He was judicious and generous. Chapel debts he abhorred, and he gave liberally that they might be liquidated. He had the art of inducing others to work and to make sacrifices in promoting the cause of God. By fidelity and diligence he rose from being a junior clerk to be head of the firm and mayor of the town.

“ How do you get on in this severe weather? I feel the cold exceedingly, never more so. It makes me thankful for temporal mercies, which we are apt to enjoy on ordinary occasions without special thanks-

giving. O that our gratitude were but in proportion to the Divine bounty !

" You will, no doubt, have heard of the terrible calamity connected with the theatre of this city. We feel afflicted and disgraced by the sad event.* Chrissie unites with me in love and best wishes to yourself and Eliza.

" I remain,

" Your affectionate brother,

" P. M'OWAN."

The following notes of the closing scene are furnished by his daughter, who watched over him by day and night with unceasing care :—

" HE took great delight in the worship of the sanctuary ; and nothing but complete inability could induce him to absent himself. The first Sunday in 1870 he was intent on renewing his covenant with God, and partaking of the Lord's Supper, once more with his people. Though he was suffering much, no persuasion could prevail with him to remain at home. His weakness, however, was so great that he was obliged to leave before the service was concluded. He afterwards said that it was a great satisfaction to him to have been present.

" The word of the Lord was precious unto him, and he always delighted in its perusal. St. John's Gospel was at this time the morning portion for family worship. This he very much enjoyed. After hearing one of the chapters read, he remarked, ' I never saw the sublimity and beauty of the discourses of Jesus, as recorded by St. John, as I have done lately.'

" When too weak for other employment, he spent much of his time in secret converse with God. At the beginning of this year, he received two letters from

* Eighteen persons had been trampled to death during a panic which occurred at the Bristol theatre a day or two before.

mothers, requesting his prayers for the conversion of their children; and when Miss M'Owan observed, 'Though you cannot preach now, this is important work for you,' he replied, 'It is, dear; I have never spent so much time in intercession for friends, as I have done since I came here.' Gladly did he accede to these requests, and daily did he plead with God for these objects of parental affection.

"On another occasion he said that he did not recollect one instance in which he had persevered in earnest daily prayer for the conversion of an individual without the desired result.

"During the month of January, the disease made rapid progress, and his sufferings considerably increased; but his mind was still calmly stayed on God. On the 18th he repeated these lines, as expressive of his religious experience:—

'I thank Thee, uncreated Sun,
That Thy bright beams on me have shined;
I thank Thee, who hast overthrown
My foes, and heal'd my wounded mind;
I thank Thee, whose enlivening voice
Bids my freed heart in Thee rejoice.'

Adding, 'I like that emblem, "uncreated Sun," it is so expressive.' Often he indulged in pleasing anticipation of joining the large number of his intimate friends who were enjoying the heavenly rest, sometimes repeating,—

'My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with Thee.'

"Towards the end of the month the pain had increased so much, that the doctor advised he should keep to his bed. This he did; and till within the last two days he suffered much less, except from extreme weakness. On the morning of the 30th his daughter asked if he remembered it was the Sabbath? He replied, 'O yes! my mind has been filled with those lines:—

HE RISES, who mankind has bought
With grief and pain extreme ;
'T was great to speak a world from nought ;
'T was greater to redeem !'

"February 2nd.—He desired the 407th hymn to be read to him, beginning,

'None is like Jeshurun's God,
So great, so strong, so high,' etc.;

and said it had been much on his mind during his illness.

"February 3rd.—After repeating the lines,

'I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me,'

he remarked, 'The very core of the mediatorial plan is there, and nothing else will give peace to the soul.'

"February 7th.—He wished the 63rd Psalm to be read ; and this being done, he said, 'These Psalms are like ingots of gold.' And, after a pause, added, 'Wonderful ! wonderful ! None but God could have inspired them.'"

We here give the following extract from the very interesting communication on the occasion of Mr. M'OWAN's death, sent to the "Methodist Recorder" by the Rev. F. E. Toyne :—

"It was my privilege to see much of Mr. M'OWAN through this season. All was profoundly tranquil. Several times he said, 'I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.' 'I am on the Rock.' 'Christ is all the world to me.' He would repeat, 'How simple is the way of salvation ! I never saw it more so than I do now.' One Sunday evening, I told him I was going to preach. He called me back to his bedside, for his disease was laying him

low, and, exerting himself, he said, ‘My dear young friend, exalt Christ,—exalt Christ! This is the ministry that converts sinners, and glorifies God. Hold up Christ. I shall never do it again. But exalt Him while you can.’”

We now return to Miss M‘Owan’s notes.

“One morning, being asked whether he had slept during the night, he replied, ‘I have spent it in reviewing the transgressions of my youth. They all came before me, even the minutest things; those I have never thought of since I committed them; and I was constrained to cry with David, “Remember not the sins of my youth, O Lord!” I felt that, if saved at all, it must be as the chief of sinners.’

“On other occasions he said, ‘Jesus reigns.’

‘He ever lives above,
For me to intercede.’

‘I have no anxiety.’ ‘God is love.’.....

‘Me for Thine own Thou lov’st to take,
In time and in eternity:
Thou never, never wilt forsake
A helpless worm that trusts in Thee.

“To a friend who called, he said, ‘I am *suffering*,—suffering the will of God.’.....To the inquiry of another, ‘I am just gushing into life.....What a mercy it is that without even the plea of innocency, we are freely ‘accepted in the Beloved!’

“When one of his attendants was trying to soothe him by a gentle friction of his hands, he repeated the verse,—

‘Never will I remove
Out of Thy hands my cause;
But rest in Thy redeeming love,
And hang upon Thy cross.’

“Again, when his position was being changed, to

ease him a little in his extreme pain, in an under-tone he uttered,—

‘ O that without a lingering groan
I may the welcome word receive ;
My body with my charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live ! ’

“ To one who had kindly helped in nursing him, he said, ‘ How kind you are ! I have often to “ mean the thanks I cannot speak.” What shall I render to God for all His benefits ? ’

“ On being informed that a kind friend had brought some little delicacy for him, he fervently expressed his gratitude, saying, ‘ What am I, or my father’s house, that Thou, Lord, art thus mindful of me ? All have thought too highly of me.’

“ There was now such an utter prostration of strength that he could speak but little ; he, however, told us that while he lay silently, he employed the time in praying, praising, and meditating.

“ As the intensity of pain increased, his daughter said, ‘ Papa, you feel it hard to bear.’ ‘ Yes,’ he replied, ‘ It is a *furnace*. But I would not murmur. No, I cannot. God is good. I live by faith in the “ Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” A few more battles, and it will be all over.’

“ Having repeated to him a few verses of hymns and portions of Scripture that seemed suitable to his state, he said, ‘ I wish you to understand, that though I speak little, all these portions are effectual in comforting me. I am on the Rock. Christ is all to me. What could I do without Christ ? ’

“ A night shortly before his death, he said to his daughter, ‘ God Almighty bless you for all your loving attentions ! *He will.*’ Then he paused, and an expression of deep anxiety passed over his face.—‘ But I don’t know *how*. Still, I am sure He will. I want to live for your sake, Chrissie, dear.’

“ In the middle of another night, while giving him a little refreshment, she asked if he had had any sleep.

He answered, 'No, dear Chrissie, I have been watching you, and thanking God for giving you an hour's sleep, which you greatly needed.'

"Seeing that the end was drawing near, she said, 'You will soon be with mamma, Jeanie, and Mary.' 'Yes,' he replied, while his face beamed with gladness, 'and with all the brethren, too.'

"On the last day, she asked what message he wished to be sent to his loved ones in Africa. He replied calmly, 'Tell them, I shall not be long here. All is clear. Sweet peace. Not abounding joy.' He then repeated,—

'While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyes shall close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold Thee on Thy throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.'

"Referring to the patience and fortitude of Mrs. M'Owan in her last illness, he said, 'Little did I think she was teaching *me* how to die, or that I should so soon follow her! What a blessed re-union it will be!'

"During the last night fearful paroxysms of pain came on, but in the midst of all he was patient, and though conscious to the last moment, no complaint escaped his lips. As morning approached, feeling that his hour of departure had come, he said, 'Come, Lord Jesus! come quickly!' After a pause, he added, 'He will.' 'I am on the Rock.' Then, with emphasis, 'He is come.' His last words, uttered with great difficulty, were, 'Precious Jesus! MY REST!'"

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord :...Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

The occasion of his death was improved on March 24th, in Ebenezer chapel, King Street, when the Rev. James Clapham preached from 2 Corinthians v. 1, 2;

and an account of his conversion, call to the ministry, and triumph over his last enemy, was read by the Rev. F. E. Toyne. A large congregation, including most of the ministers of the district, was present on the occasion.

His remains, with those of his wife, are interred in Arno Vale Cemetery, in the suburbs of Bristol. On the tombstone are these inscriptions:—

Sacred to the Memory
OF THE
REV. PETER M'OWAN,
WHO DIED 15TH FEBRUARY, 1870,
AGED SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS.

He was a man of pre-eminently holy life, a faithful Pastor and a successful Minister of the Gospel for fifty-two years. He died as he had lived, resting on the Atonement of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In Memory
OF HIS
BELOVED WIFE JANE,
WHO FELL ASLEEP, CALMLY RESTING ON JESUS,
ON 16TH SEPTEMBER, 1869,
AGED SIXTY-EIGHT YEARS.

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.”

CHAPTER EIGHTEENTH.

CONCLUSION.

It may be considered that in the preceding pages the PRIVATE character of my dear brother has been sufficiently brought out. Much of his DOMESTIC character also appears in his correspondence. But a nearer view of it is supplied by his son-in-law, the Rev. William Wilson, who naturally had opportunities of intimate knowledge which others did not possess, having resided for some time under his roof. He writes as follows :—

“ IN all the private duties and domestic relations of life, Mr. M’Owan’s walk was most exemplary. His daily life before the members of his household was an impressive commentary on, and a beautiful illustration of, two passages of Scripture on which he delighted to discourse :—‘ My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went : ’ and, ‘ I have set the Lord always before me : because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. ’ It was his highest aim, and constant ambition, to follow the Lord fully, and daily to walk in the light of the Lord. The hymn so often upon his lips was a paraphrase on his Christian life :—

‘ Thee may I set at my right hand,
Whose eyes my inmost substance see, ’ etc.

“ During the past twenty-three years we have known him intimately, and throughout that period we have never witnessed a temper, or heard a word, or seen an act at variance with the law of love to God and man. He lived in habitual preparedness for active service on

earth, or instant removal to heaven. 'By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,' he commanded his household after him, being an example of Christian consistency and devout godliness.

"Every one who knew his private life could not fail to be impressed by the plainness and simplicity of his tastes, the frugality and self-denial of his habits. Expense and vanity in dress, sumptuous fare, time and money spent in mere pleasure, and extravagance of any kind, were regarded by him with strong disapprobation, seeing that so much remained to be done for God, both at home and abroad.

"His order and diligence were very commendable. 'A place and time for everything,' was a favourite maxim. A book needed, a manuscript, or periodical, could generally be at once produced; whilst his diligence in reading and study, even to old age, was most exemplary. He never whiled away time, or was triflingly employed in his own home. He was a devout and diligent student of the One Book, and a doer of one work. Those who have wondered at his energy and power in the pulpit, had they known the time that he daily spent with God in prayer, and in pondering over the Bible in his study, would have known at once wherein his great strength lay.

"In no place, and in no service, did his communion with God or his deep piety appear more than when engaged in *family worship*. The profoundest reverence, the most solemn adoration, the humblest confession, fervent praise, holy thanksgiving, earnest supplication, and intense love to God and man, were expressed in words which warmed the heart of each worshipper who intelligently engaged with him, and created in them the same feelings of reverence and awe. But in these approaches to God, when his loving heart began to move his lips in *intercession*, none who were privileged to join in the exercise could remain unmoved or unedified. His intercessions were comprehensive, concise, and powerful. His family prayers were generally short,

for none knew better than he that we are not heard 'for our much speaking.' It was often matter of astonishment that he could ask for so much in so few words.

"He was a lover of good men, to whatever branch of the Church they belonged; and earnestly did he intercede that grace, mercy, and peace might be their portion, and that prosperity might crown their labours in the cause of God. He loved Methodism as his own soul. He who touched her, touched the apple of his eye. Daily did he pray for her in her varied spheres of action, and for her thousand agencies. The President of the Conference was habitually and specially remembered, with any distinguished minister who had special work assigned him for the benefit of the Connexion, whilst the blessing of God was implored in behalf of the ministry at large, and upon all who laboured for the good of souls at home or abroad.

"His daily supplications for our gracious Queen and her ministers were hearty and loyal to the highest pitch of patriotism. The houses of Parliament, judges, and magistrates, were also duly remembered, together with every measure of national importance which was brought before Parliament, and all matters affecting the welfare of Church or State.

"The work of Christian Missions lay near his heart, and was frequently the topic of family conversation. He had absolute faith in the fulfilment of prophecy regarding the triumph of the Gospel over the superstitions of the heathen, and in the omnipotence of Christ to conquer the world. His love for the Wesleyan Missionary Society was great, and his daily prayers for its prosperity were most powerful. In these supplications the missionaries and the numerous converts of the infant churches abroad, in their varied circumstances, were duly presented before the Throne of Grace. Often, as we have witnessed his wrestling with God, and joined with him in family worship, especially on the Sabbath mornings, we have breathed the prayer,—

‘Of all Thy gifts we ask but one,
We ask the constant power to pray.’

“As a father, he was most affectionate, and in his correspondence with us abroad his letters were instructive. They were looked for as means of grace, and were always refreshing, strengthening, and comforting to mind and heart. His devout and earnest spirit breathed in all he wrote, and nothing gave him more delight than to know that his children were honoured of God with success in preaching the Gospel to the heathen. When he had to resign a loved one, not only by separation from his home, but by death on a solitary and far distant shore, the genuineness of his piety and strength of his Christian principles appeared in his submission to the Divine will. He mourned, but did not murmur,—calmly saying, ‘Thy will be done.’

“He never paraded his personal experience, and seldom spoke of it even to his nearest relations. His practical endeavour was to do the work of a godly man, by attending to ‘whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report;’ and those who knew him in private life know how blessedly and unceasingly he practised these things. They are now comforted by the assurance that his sainted spirit is for ever with the Lord; and are grateful to the goodness and grace of his Heavenly Father, that enabled their earthly parent to leave behind the fragrance of an honourable name, and the legacy of a spotless life.”

On the subject of the MINISTERIAL character of my dear brother, I feel that it would scarcely become me to express my own views. But being aware that the Rev. Thomas Jackson had known him from his first coming from Scotland, that he had marked his course through all the remainder of his life, and that in his official character, as the editor of our Connexional

publications, he had had much correspondence with him, I ventured to request that venerable man to favour me with any remarks concerning him which he might think fit to make. In reply I received what follows:—

“My acquaintance with the late Rev. Peter M’Owan began in the year 1822, when he was stationed in Waltham-Abbey, and exchanged pulpits occasionally with the preachers in the First London Circuit. He was then in all the vigour of his youth, and the ardour of his first love. His zeal was intense: and both in preaching and public prayer his earnestness and importunity often rose to agony; so that it seemed he must die upon the spot, unless his supplications received an immediate answer, and unless the people would at once accept the terms of reconciliation with God.

“Had he persevered in the same course of bodily exertion, the probability is, that at an early age, like the gifted Thomas Walsh, he would soon have died of exhaustion; for after a while his strength declined apace, and he was compelled to take a season of comparative rest. He wisely took the warning which he had received both from his friends and his enfeebled constitution, to place his feelings under restraint, and to be less vehement in his public ministrations. His love to Christ and for the souls of men suffered no abatement; but his physical powers were less severely taxed than they had formerly been.

“The earlier years of his ministerial life he spent in Scotland, where he had much intercourse with the Rev. Valentine Ward, a man of great energy, and of very useful talents as a minister of the Gospel. He was a means of the erection of many Methodist chapels in North Britain; but, as they were heavily burdened with debt, he thus involved himself and many other persons in distressing difficulties, which embittered the latter years of his life, and perhaps shortened his days; so that he paid dear for his indis-

cretion. In other respects, however, he was entitled to high commendation, as a man who entertained just views of the office which he and his colleagues sustained. At a District-Meeting held at Aberdeen, in the year 1819, he addressed a sermon to his brethren on the memorable words of the apostles, uttered in Jerusalem, when 'seven men of honest report' were entrusted with the relief of their poor fellow-Christians. 'We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word.' (Acts vi. 4.)

"These two things combined constitute the true secret of ministerial power and success. Preaching without prayer may be admired for its eloquence and ingenuity. It may gratify the intellect and the imagination; but, as to the real design of preaching, it is powerless, leaving the hearers impenitent and unbelieving, and therefore guilty, sinful, and unhappy, just as it found them. Prayer without preaching may benefit the praying man himself, but will not convert and save the people; for it withholds the means which God has appointed in order to this end; asking of God to do that which He has laid upon men as matter of duty, when He uttered the command, 'Preach the Word.' Mr. Ward's very impressive discourse, which he afterwards published, was doubtless both heard and read by Mr. M'Owan, who was the colleague of the preacher. And although he did not then for the first time connect prayer with his public ministry, he did connect them to the end of his life, and that in the most exemplary manner. It was impossible to be in his company without perceiving that God was with him. In other words, that he lived in a state of habitual intercourse with his Maker, so as to fear Him, to love Him, and to enjoy His favour. His whole conversation savoured of heaven and of heavenly things; showing that to these subjects his attention was habitually directed. His spirit was reverent, and his conscience tender.

"It was impossible to hear him preach without perceiving that a rich unction of the Holy One was upon

him, for his 'Word was with power.' We have no hesitation in saying that, in his degree, our late friend was actuated by the same spirit, and followed in the footsteps, of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Through the entire course of his useful and exemplary life he never ceased to exemplify the doctrine which he heard from the lips of his Superintendent at the District-Meeting just mentioned. In the several stations which he occupied he not only prayed and preached, but '*gave himself* to prayer,' '*gave himself* to the ministry of the Word,' '*gave himself*' to both '*continually*,' and that with an entireness which few have surpassed, and a strength of purpose which nothing could move.

"In the exercise of his pastoral duties he looked for results, and was never satisfied but when they appeared. It was in vain that every preaching appointment was fulfilled, unless the grand designs of the Gospel were accomplished in the conversion of sinners and the edification of believers. Crowded congregations, presenting nothing more than a bare attendance upon the Word preached, could never satisfy him, however they might profess to admire his sermons; but when persons who had lived in carelessness and sin became penitent, so as to seek the Lord with prayers and tears; when these mourners believed in Christ to the saving of their souls, and knew their sins forgiven; when men and women who had been born in sin presented evident proof that they were '*born again*,' '*born of the Spirit*,' '*born of God*;' when babes in Christ grew up into young men, and young men became fathers,—then was the heart of this good minister of Christ made truly glad, and for all this he presented fervent thanksgiving to the God of all grace. And again, when these tokens of religious prosperity were withheld, he mourned, wept, and made supplication to God; he made great searching of heart to find out the hindrance, and he cordially united with his fellow-labourers in the use of every means likely to introduce a better state of things; at the same time enforcing the discipline of the Con-

nexion, which is so admirably adapted to extend and foster the work of God.

“In addition to the regular labour of his circuits, Mr. M'OWan not unfrequently employed his pen in the cause of truth and righteousness. He enriched the *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* by many valuable contributions, all of which were designed and adapted to advance the cause of true religion; for he was a sound theologian, and had no reason to be ashamed of any of his literary compositions. His volume on the Sabbath, and the biographical narratives which he published, are alike creditable to his judgment and taste. When, about forty years ago, Mr. V. Ward published an octavo volume of sermons, furnished by Wesleyan ministers, the profits of which were to be applied to the relief of Scotch chapels, Mr. M'OWan supplied one on ‘Noah's Faith,’ which was read at the time by a member of the University of Oxford, who said he deemed it one of the most eloquent discourses he had ever seen.

“I have often thought that this excellent man was a model which his brethren in general might imitate with advantage, being well-principled, attentive to every branch of Christian and official duty relating to the work of God whether at home or abroad. In the Conference he was observant of every subject of discussion, and, when necessary, gave his opinion in a few words modestly uttered, with a respectful deference to the judgment of his brethren. He stood instinctively aloof as a Methodist minister from every thing that had even the appearance of faction; for, like the angel of the church of Ephesus, he ‘could not bear them that were evil.’ Of missions to the heathen he was an earnest and untiring advocate, anxious to imbue all around him with the spirit of holy zeal and enterprise by which he was himself actuated. Amidst all the trials through which the Connexion was called to pass in the course of his life, he remained faithful to his ordination vows, and lent an unflinching and efficient aid in maintaining the good deposit of doctrinal truth and godly discipline which Mr. Wesley

and his immediate successors bequeathed to their sons in the Gospel. In his personal intercourse with his brethren and friends, he was gentle as a child ; but in the resistance of such evils as Popish idolatry and Socinian error, like the fiery Tishbite, he was vehement and uncompromising. When such men disappear from the ministerial staff of Methodism, we may well say, ' Help, Lord ; for the godly man ceaseth ! ' ”*

With the following extracts from letters of condolence, addressed to Miss M'Owan on the death of her father, we conclude our labour of love.

The Rev. W. B. Pope, the theological tutor at Didsbury, writes :—

“ FATHER M'OWAN has entered into rest, after a long, unspotted, and most useful career. Honoured of God, in life and in death, he can hardly be mourned when called to his reward. Among my earliest remembrances, the preaching of Mr. M'Owan is by me gratefully treasured. He was one of the first who opened my eyes to see, and my heart to feel, what a glorious mission is that of the preacher of the Gospel. May the men whom he has left behind, and by whom he was much loved, have grace to emulate his example, and follow him as he followed Christ ! ”

One of our most worthy and useful laymen, John Napier, Esq., of Manchester, writes :—

“ It was my privilege to enjoy the friendship of your saintly parent during a long course of years, and I often wished that I could imitate the many excellencies which adorned his character.

“ He truly made the cause of Christ his own. It appeared to be his meat and drink to do the will of his

* In the interval (unfortunately too long) between the writing and publication of this letter the venerable author has passed away to his eternal rest. He died in March, 1873, in the ninetieth year of his age.

Lord. The salvation of souls lay near his heart, and very joyous will be the greetings of those saved by his instrumentality who have preceded him to the purer fellowship of heaven."

The Rev. Dr. Hoole also thus expresses himself:—

"EVER since the year 1828 I have valued the ministry and enjoyed the friendship of your dear father. He was faithful in our days of trial, and his advocacy of Missions was only equalled, or surpassed, by his zeal for the conversion of sinners under his personal labours. While mourning the decree which removes men so valuable to the Church, I have imagined the greeting your father would receive on being presented at the foot of the Throne. How many thousands converted and edified by his preaching, would recognize him, and sing renewed praises on seeing him received into the company of the blessed! What a glorious 'Amen!' would be sounded to the welcome, 'Well done, good and faithful servant;...enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'"

POSTSCRIPT.

TO THESE remarkable and instructive testimonies there may, with propriety, be added a few others, not in order to qualify or correct the impression which the preceding pages may be presumed to have produced, but to afford fuller information, particularly to such readers as had no personal knowledge of Mr. M'Owan.

Having been requested to preach Mr. M'Owan's Funeral Sermon, at Bristol, I had undertaken to do so in March, 1870, but a severe attack of sickness hindered me. In preparing for this service I wrote to several ministers for assistance in depicting the character and labours of my deceased friend. From the replies received I select two for preservation here. The first

is from the venerable author of this volume, and will be deemed worthy to be inserted, because, although repeating several things, it touches more than one point which has been omitted, or but slightly noticed in the preceding pages, and is as honourable to the writer as to the subject of it.

“My brother was born at Crieff, in Perthshire. He was the second son of the family, and was remarkable from his childhood for his affectionate disposition and his blameless conduct. In the spring of 1813 I went to reside in Glasgow, and there, under the ministry of the late Rev. Valentine Ward, was brought to God, and joined the Methodist Society. I wrote to my parents an account of the change I had experienced, and exhorted all at home to seek after the same happiness. Peter at once saw the necessity of this : but wrote to say, ‘I also must be a great sinner, but I cannot feel it as I ought. What must I do?’ Further correspondence followed, and a copy of our Hymn-Book having been sent, the Hymns on Formal Religion were made useful in producing a thorough conviction of his state as a sinner, and of his need of a Saviour. He sought and soon obtained mercy through faith in the Atonement.

“He now began to associate with a few serious persons in the neighbourhood, and continued to do so, till at the Conference of 1814, after a few previous visits to Crieff, by the late Rev. William Clegg, sen., the Rev. Richard Heape, now Supernumerary at Rochdale, was appointed as a second minister to the Perth Circuit, and was advised by Mr. Clegg to go to Crieff, and try what he could do there. It was a pure Home Missionary effort. But Mr. Heape was just the man for the work. He got a room for preaching. Conversions soon took place, and a Society was formed, of which my brother became a member. Mr. Heape soon perceived that he had gifts for usefulness, and tried to persuade him to attempt preaching. This

however, he stoutly resisted, though not without strong misgivings of heart, till after the Conference of 1815.—His first efforts produced astonishment among the townspeople. It was the first specimen of Methodist 'local' preaching with which they had been favoured, and the impression was deep. His acceptance and usefulness were more and more unfolded, until at the Conference of 1817 he was called to the regular work of the ministry.

“He entered upon this work with much fear and trembling; but persuaded that he was in the path of duty, he devoted himself to it with all his powers of soul and body; being often in labours more abundant. Soon after his appointment to the City Road Circuit, in 1835, the effects of the extreme earnestness of his manner in the pulpit began to show themselves in a serious complaint of the chest, which before the end of the year disabled him from public duties. He was deeply affected with the kindness shown by the circuit and by his brethren in the ministry, in making arrangements for the supply of his place during the following year, that he might try, by rest and change of air, to recruit his strength. His letters from the Isle of Wight, and other parts, at this time, are fraught with expressions of gratitude to God and His people for the advantages he then enjoyed. And in the same strain he also wrote from Colchester concerning the kindness of his colleagues and friends there: to which circuit he was appointed in 1837, as suitable on leaving City Road. There is no doubt that the kindness shown him in these two circuits, was, by the blessing of God, the means of adding full thirty years to the period of his labours and usefulness.

“I have not time at present to examine his letters minutely,—they are so many. Suffice it to say, that throughout, as might be expected, they breathe the spirit of humble piety, of respect and affection towards his colleagues, and of unabated zeal for the glory of his Divine Master.

“He was indeed to me a brother beloved. No

shadow ever crossed the sunshine of our fraternal love. He came 'after me,' and was worthily 'preferred before me.' I always rejoiced in his usefulness, and in the honours showered upon him by the Church, and by his brethren in the ministry; thankful to God that he had made me useful in bringing him to the knowledge of the Saviour, and thankful, also, that our native place should, just at that time, have been made the seat of a home-mission; when, in addition to all the other good done, it became the nursing-place of my brother's gifts for the ministry. For without that home-mission, there was not the slightest probability that he would ever have become a Wesleyan minister."

Under date of March 12th, 1870, the Rev. R. N. Young wrote as follows:—

"I WAS his colleague for twelve months in Leeds, Oxford Place; but as I resided at Holbeck, my intercourse with him was limited. I wish it had not been so. The *friendship* of a man whose *casual* influence was so impressive would indeed have been a boon.

"I saw him, of course, under very various circumstances. He had stormy elements to deal with in Leeds, and his well-known inflexibility of principle stimulated, I fear, the opposition of those whose pleasure it seemed to embarrass his administration; but he was faithful not only to the traditions of his Church, but to the spirit of his Master. I never knew him to *come down* from the heights of a life in perpetual communion with God. In the social circle, in the unreserved fellowship of the ministers' meetings, and on occasions when he was almost playful, he kept up the Christian; and the high tone of his godliness ever seemed natural.

"I believe that the saddest hour of his life,—though there was something of the spirit of 2 Tim. iv. 6-8 in his sadness,—was when, at the Manchester District-Meeting, he asked leave to become a Supernumerary. No one who was present will be likely to forget

that scene. He himself failed visibly from that day.

"I travelled with him from the Liverpool Conference to Bolton. With tears in his eyes, and with faltering voice, he spoke to me of God's goodness to him through the long course of his ministry; and he dwelt with expressions of deep gratitude upon the kindness and honour which had been shown to him by his brethren in the ministry. But I could see that but for the grace of God, it would have broken his heart to fall back from the front rank of work, and to retire to the quiet which his years demanded.

"It was my privilege to show him a trivial kindness before we parted; and I shall never forget his graceful expression of thanks, and the warmth of his parting blessing. I never saw him again."

The resolution adopted by the Conference on the occasion of Mr. M'Owan's retirement from active service, in 1868, has been inserted, as marking the high esteem in which he was held by his ministerial brethren quite down to the close of his long career. When the character of him which had been prepared according to rule for insertion in the printed "Minutes" was under consideration, at the Conference of 1870, an interesting conversation took place. More than one of the brethren indulged in biographical reminiscences of their departed friend as well as in eulogistic remarks.

The Rev. Charles Prest bore a just testimony to the sincerity and depth of his personal piety, and added that he was an invaluable pastor as well as a powerful preacher; tender and affectionate in all pastoral relations; yet firm and unflinching in his administration of discipline; altogether as complete a minister of Christ as it had been his privilege to know.

The Rev. John Rattenbury, after expressing his

opinion that Mr. M'Owan was one of the most remarkable men that God had ever given to the Methodist Connexion, recalled a sermon which he had heard him preach at the opening of Irwell Street chapel, Salford, in 1826. Dr. Bunting preached in the morning of the day, Dr. Newton in the evening, Mr. M'Owan in the afternoon; and remarkable as all the services on that occasion were, the afternoon service was the most so. The text was Acts xxvi. 25: "I am not mad, most noble Festus;" etc. The word was with mighty power, and he had never seen so much weeping caused by religious feeling at any period of his life. There was scarcely a countenance which did not manifest deep religious emotion. He also noted that Mr. M'Owan habitually addressed himself to the conscience, and refrained from topics calculated to awaken doubt, or provoke discussion among his hearers. The Rev. C. Haydon has kindly written the substance of what he spoke on the occasion:—

"I well remember his first sermon in London during the Conference of 1822. Dr. Newton had been expected to preach at Southwark chapel on a Sunday evening, but was unable to fulfil his appointment. The Rev. John Burdsall, at that time the resident minister at Southwark, announced that the vacancy would be supplied by a young minister from Scotland, whom nature had made an orator, and grace an able minister of the New Testament. The chapel was crowded in every part. A slight trepidation was apparent in the manner of the preacher at first, but it soon passed away. His Scotch accent and juvenile appearance gave some interest to the service; but the fervency of his prayers, and the fluency of his preaching, were irresistible. He carried all before him. The text was Hab. iii. 2: 'O Lord, revive Thy work;' and some passages remain in my memory still, especially those that related to the neces-

sity of a revival of religion. It was necessary, he said, because of the prevalence of immorality and ungodliness. Here he instanced the profanation of the Sabbath, and the drunkenness, not of men only, but (O shame to human nature!) of women, also. It was necessary, too, because, without great and frequent revivals of religion, religion could never become universal. These topics, and others, were handled with boldness and authority, while his rapid utterance and vehement manner made a strong and lasting impression on the congregation. I have seen a painting of John Knox preaching before Mary Queen of Scots, which, more than anything else, recalled that memorable evening at Southwark." "I was only once associated with him," Mr. Haydon continues, "in any public service, viz., at a missionary meeting near Bradford, about 1851. His spirit was fervent as ever; his topics were the character of the missionary undertaking, as exemplifying the true work of the Church of Christ—evangelical and evangelistic; but his manner was deliberate and his tones quiet, wonderfully different from the impassioned utterances of his early days. A few years afterwards I heard him, when taking part in one of the annual meetings of the Missionary Society at Exeter Hall, when perhaps the union of his daughter with a Fijian missionary had intensified his interest in the work. The old fire was still burning, but his 'natural force' was 'abated.' Yet he carried the meeting to a high pitch of feeling, as he addressed it on one of his favourite topics,—the promise and the power of the Holy Spirit.

"Once more I met with him at the Liverpool Conference of 1868, when he was appointed to preach and administer the Lord's Supper, but, although present, was unable to officiate. Another minister preached, and at Mr. M'OWAN's request, I took the principal part of the sacramental service. His voice was feeble and tremulous, his strength prostrate, his frame worn out. ...May the Head of the Church in mercy bestow on us many such pastors and teachers for the work of

the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ!"

The Rev. Ebenezer Moulton, a former colleague of Mr. M'Owan, bore a similar testimony to the power of his preaching. Dr. Waddy chiefly directed attention to the fact that, after he came to reside at Bristol, he was unable to discharge any public duty, but that, amid weakness and decay, there was no abatement of his love and zeal.

Mr. Haydon's remarks on the vehemence of Mr. M'Owan's manner in early life elicited some confirmatory statements from me. "He seemed," I said, "as though he would fly out of the pulpit; yet while his excitement was so intense I never heard him say, or heard of his saying, an injudicious thing, or utter a sentence, unbecoming a minister under the full consciousness of his official responsibility. His power in preaching and in prayer, however, was not merely that of intense desire and conviction vigorously expressed, but of a prevailing Divine influence. You felt in listening to him not only that the whole man—body, soul, and spirit—was there, but that God was there, confirming the word of His servant. Another feature of his character was his habitual seriousness. He constantly maintained the old Methodist gravity, and carried it wherever he went, sometimes indicating by his looks, when he said nothing, his regret at any departure from it on the part of others."

The following anecdote, illustrative of his diligence in pastoral visitation, was lately related to me by a lady. "When I was a child," said she, "Mr. M'Owan called at my father's house for his customary subscription to one of the Connexional funds. Neither of my parents was at home: but he did not hasten away, or

engage in general conversation, but sat down, and said, 'I am sorry that no one is at home.*' Turning to the pictures on the wall, he asked, 'Who are these?' 'My grandfather and grandmother, Sir.' He then began to speak about the blessedness of having descended from pious ancestors, and the obligation to follow in their steps. Afterwards he kneeled down and prayed that I might give my heart to God, as he had incited and exhorted me to do."

All this pains taken with a girl of about fourteen years of age was highly characteristic of the man. That child is now a grandmother in spectacles; but she added, when telling me the story, "Although I did not then decide for God, I never forgot that prayer. I believe the influence of the conversation will remain with me as long as I live."

Next to his diligent discharge of his circuit duties, Mr. M'Owan was remarkable for his advocacy of our missions. His services were much in request for missionary anniversaries, and were always cheerfully rendered, as far as he was able to give them. It is to the honour of his hearers that he was so welcome among them on occasions of this nature; for he never pandered to a vicious taste by frothy, irrelevant, discursive addresses, but kept close to his theme, and treated it with becoming seriousness, and sometimes with

* I might, and perhaps should, have added, that the subscription was paid, though the subscribers were absent; it being a rule in that house to put by the money on the day it became due, so that it might be ready when called for. Dr. Coke's delight on finding that his annual guinea "for the missions" had been awaiting him nearly twelve months was a cherished tradition. So far was the practice carried, that the weekly class-money was put by when the day came round, though the member was far away. What was dedicated, was sacred.

amazing effect! His appeals to the consciences and hearts of his hearers, prompted by his unfailing confidence in the goodness of his cause, his faith in the promises of God, pity for the souls of men, zeal for the honour of his Lord, and love to a dying Redeemer, could not but elevate and improve those who heard them, while they powerfully aided the work in hand. Anecdote was not his *forte*, nor did he excel in argument; but in exhortation, appeal, and encouragement he had few superiors; and even long after the lapse of years had abated his vigour in preaching he would rekindle under the influence of this subject, and almost renew his youth on the platform. Of his earliest efforts no record has been preserved; but there are several traditions of meetings carried away "as with a flood" by his holy vehemence; and of one instance in which a special additional collection was called for and made as soon as he sat down. His first appearances in London in the character of an advocate of missions are thus described by the Rev. Dr. Hoole in the letter referred to on page 68, which was sent without solicitation to the writer of these memoirs shortly after his decease. It is dated May 11th, 1870:—

"My first recollection of the late Rev. Peter M'Owan was during his second year's appointment to the Third Manchester Circuit. I had just returned from the quiet study of languages in India, and from calm discussions with Brahmans and other Hindus on subjects connected with the soul and God: in which it was not prudent to manifest any warmth; so ready were they to interpret warmth to mean anger, and to claim, in consequence, the best of the argument. It was with astonishment I listened to his vehement exhortations and appeals in the pulpit founded on a large and accurate knowledge of Holy Scripture, and of the character of the people whom he addressed.

Sometimes I feared for his life in the pulpit ; and it did not surprise me to hear, that an Annuitant Society in Manchester refused to admit him as a member, on the ground that he was shortening his life by his manner of preaching. In the spring of 1829 I was engaged with Mr. M'Owan in a Missionary Deputation to Sheffield, and then learned something of the intensity of his zeal for missions.

"In 1831 I was also associated with him on the platform of Exeter Hall, at the first meeting of the Missionary Society in that building, then recently erected. That was a memorable occasion. Such names as Montgomery the poet, Poynder, who succeeded in abolishing widow burning in British India, Dr. H. F. Burder, Dr. Raffles, Mr. George Bennett, of the London Missionary Society, Robert Newton, James Dixon, and Peter Jones, the Indian chief, with Mr. Haslope, one of the Treasurers of the Society, in the chair, formed a company not to be exceeded in ability and influence in any age of the Church. Mr. M'Owan was earnest, as usual ; but he had been most impassioned at the meeting of the London District Auxiliary, in Great Queen Street chapel, on the previous Wednesday, when he secured a collection of more than ordinary amount."

Of his later speeches we may judge by that delivered at Exeter Hall in May, 1850, which, as it is not of equal length with some others, may properly be inserted here ; omitting however all notice of the frequent interruptions occasioned by the plaudits of his hearers.

"The Rev. Peter M'Owan, of Liverpool, said :—Sir, the circumstances through which this great Society has been called to pass during the last twelve months have led myself, and I may say the great body of the Society's friends in the provinces, to review the principles upon which its operations are founded, and the great results

that it has wrought out. And it affords me unspeakable pleasure, on this occasion, to say, that that examination of principles and results has issued in the confirmation of our faith, in the exciting of our hopes, and in the increase of our zeal. I cannot but feel that I and all who advocate this great cause stand upon firm ground. What are our principles? One of them is, that man, wherever he is found, is fallen, a sinner, the victim of passion, the subject of guilt and misery. Is not that at the very base of our operations? It was the fact of man's fall that justified the eternal Father in delivering up His Son to be incarnated in the habiliments, the lowly habiliments, of our nature, and to be made an offering for sin, and that justified the Son in laying down His life for the ransom of a lost world. And when we consider that six hundred millions of our fellow-creatures are in this fallen state, without God, and having no hope in the world, who, I ask this day, looking back upon what he has done to promote their recovery, can for a moment think he has done too much? or, in looking at what he has given, can for a moment think he has given too much? or, in reference to prayer, can for a moment think he has prayed too much? Sir, we in the provinces are covered with shame to think that we have done so little, given so little, and prayed so little for the recovery of our lost heathen brethren.....

“ Another of the grand principles upon which our operations are based is, that the Gospel alone supplies an adequate remedy for the wants and woes of our fellow-men. That principle cannot be disputed by any friend of this Society, or by any individual who believes in the holy Scriptures. This is our maxim, Revelation, not reason; the Gospel, not philosophy. And knowing that the Gospel is God's remedy, and that we possess that Gospel, who can hesitate to say, that it is his bounden duty to exert all his powers, and all his influence, in order that that Gospel may be sent to those who have it not? The very fact that we possess it is in itself an evidence that God wills that we should communicate it. And whilst He has been making the

continents of the earth and the islands of the sea willing to receive the Gospel at our hands, we feel constrained to rise up and redouble our diligence, in order to communicate this gracious boon of heaven to man.

“You also hold it as a principle that the Gospel itself, unaccompanied by the Spirit, will not effect the conversion of the world; and therefore you lay it down as a principle, that the friends of Jesus and of the Heathen should pray for the outpouring of the Spirit. In that we are all also agreed; and I rejoice in the distinct and frequent reference that has been made this day to the influence of the Spirit as necessary and as sufficient, when afforded, to render the means of salvation effectual. O let us in the one heart and mind give ourselves to prayer! The more fully we realize our dependence upon the Holy Spirit for success, the greater will that success be. The more deeply parents feel their dependence upon Divine influence for the conversion of their children, the more likely are they to see, and the more speedily will they see, their children born of God. And in proportion as we have this Spirit, we shall be found to honour the Son, and to benefit our ransomed world for whom the Son died.....

“You further hold it to be a principle, that it is the duty of all who possess the Gospel to send that Gospel to those who have it not. We rejoice that this principle is taken up so generally. Our children have taken it up. The poor have taken it up. The rich have taken it up. It has become a maxim in the provinces, and I doubt not in the metropolis too, that to do something for the conversion of the Heathen is part and parcel of every Christian man's duty. And I can assure you, that recent events have but confirmed rich and poor, so far as I have had an opportunity of judging, in the determination to give more, to labour more, and to pray more in this great cause.....Sir, it is one of our principles, also, that the Gospel, in order to be effectively preached, must be preached by men who have themselves been at the foot of the Cross, and are themselves the subjects of a Divine change. We trust that we shall ever hold

that principle sacred ; for Christ does not ordinarily, or generally, send the dead to raise the dead, or the blind to lead the blind. He first makes men disciples, and then He makes them ministers ; and we in the provinces greatly rejoice that you look carefully for men who have experienced a sound conversion from sin to holiness, and who are called of God. O, if we get such men, (and we have had them furnished hitherto in sufficient abundance,) we shall, in continuance here, on these anniversary occasions, have tidings of success brighter and more extensive than even the past has been !

“It rejoices us, too, that we have a discipline that watches over our missionaries ; that, under the influence of that discipline, they are living in love, and in the exercise of holy self-denial ; and it is on account of their devotedness to Christ, subject to the Spirit’s influence, that we regard the continuation of the Divine blessing as secured to the operations of this Society. It will be to the end of the world, ‘Like priest, like people.’.....It rejoices us, also, that it is one of our principles, that, while the sheep are to be gathered into the fold, the lambs are to be shielded and duly fed. It has formed matter for regret to some of us that the school did not earlier rise up everywhere by the side of the Wesleyan-Methodist chapel. We believe that if our youth had been more generally and fully trained, at an earlier period of our Connexional history, we should have had even greater peace and prosperity, and a wider spread of our holy principles, than we have now. But blame not our fathers. The primitive Methodist preachers were giants in their days. They were occupied in felling the forest-trees, and in draining the morass. They had not time to attend much to the nursery and the rearing of the plants. God has favoured us with more propitious times and better opportunities ; and at home we now see the school rising in connection with the chapel, and we trust that this will be multiplied. But abroad, on your missionary stations, you have begun right. You have begun to give the Gospel with the

elements of education to the infant mind, at the same time that you address the adult; and often your seminaries for the young are in advance of your efforts for the adult. Go on and prosper! Be assured that the hearts of all who love God and His Christ are with you. Be assured that you have all in heaven on your side. Be assured, my dear friends, that, if any of the Lord's real followers are for a time opposing you, Christ will shed light on their minds and hearts. They cannot continue enemies of this cause. They must apostatize from Christ, before they can become confirmed opponents of the great missionary cause. We pray God, that every vestige of prejudice, and every cloud of mistake, which makes any one of Christ's followers an opponent less or more, of this cause, may be dissipated. For we know that, as the true light shineth, as the hallowing dews of heaven descend, and as the shadow of the cross of Christ comes over each of them, they will vow allegiance to this cause like us, they will emulate us in zeal and in effort, and crown Emmanuel 'Lord of all.' Let us but have the 'love of God shed abroad in every heart,' and we shall see a friend in every man, woman, and child.

"I do rejoice that the children have taken it up. In my own Circuit, last Christmas, our children have raised about £70 for your Juvenile Offering. The zeal with which many of them went about their work was most honourable. But I beg pardon for occupying so much of your time. I can only say, that I have been led to make these remarks about principles, because, ever since I entered this room, I have felt that we were standing on a rock, under the banner of the King of kings, and that all opposition to this cause must be just like that which is offered by the pebble which meets the ocean-wave as it comes with the swelling tide. I feel that all opposition to this cause must be just like the morning cloud, that flits upon the mountain-side, in opposing the rising sun. God is with us. God is with us, I say. But not one vaunting word shall I utter. The dust is my place.

And I believe the directors of this great Missionary Society, and those who are most zealous in supporting it, lie deepest in the dust. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thee, O Emmanuel! be the praise and glory of every atom of success for which we give thanks this day! With these remarks, I beg to second the Resolution."

Six years later, when the Earl of Shaftesbury presided for the first time at the Annual Meeting of the Society, Mr. M'Owan expressed himself with power and freedom on many collateral topics as well as on the great subject of the day. On the position of Methodism relatively to other bodies his language was plain and forcible. "While from a sense of duty we are friendly to all we mean to stand by Methodism. My lord, we can do more good to the Church standing as we do. (Cheers.) I rejoice in that cheer for your lordship's sake. As a member of the Church of England you need never fear injurious antagonism from Methodism. But we are Methodists, and by God's grace we will remain so. We will neither exchange our Methodism for Churchism, nor for Dissent in the abstract. We will remain Methodists, because we think we can do more good to our friends in the Church, to the Dissenters, and to the whole world, as we are, than if we were to amalgamate."

Thus he expressed himself upon a topic of temporary interest, a mere dream, of the unsubstantial character of which, however, some persons are not yet convinced, though among those sufficiently informed, there is no doubt. His next topic was one of permanent and universal interest, and his observations were just and forcible.

"It is of the highest importance that we do not come to such a work in a spirit of self-sufficiency..... It is the Spirit of the Lord that gives life. If neither

the influence of Cyrus, nor the treasures of the Babylonian exchequer, nor the zeal of the emancipated captives of Babylon, were sufficient to rebuild the Temple, and to establish the Jewish polity without Almighty aid,—how much more is the Divine agency needed by us who attempt to build that temple which has Christ for its Foundation!—which is to be composed of living stones, which is to fill the earth, and upon every part of which is to be inscribed, ‘Holiness unto the Lord.’ May we ever feel that our strength is in the Lord!”

These extracts could not conclude with a more characteristic or more valuable passage. The accessories of his eloquence cannot be transferred to paper. Wilkie’s picture of Knox before the Lords of the Congregation has been already referred to as furnishing a good idea of the vehemence of his manner in early life, though, as far as I remember, his face never wore the angry expression which the Reformer has there. In later life, when the speech just quoted was delivered, his gestures were neither many nor unusual, but there was still an energy which diffused itself through the whole man, lighting up the eye, giving emphasis to the speech, and erectness to his form, which, though small, was never crouched or bent, until it seemed almost preternaturally heightened, and until the hearers shared the enthusiasm of the speaker, and were ready to “do or die,” as he would have them.

The style of thought of which these pages present examples suited well with such a style of delivery. Here is no attempt at nice pictorial delineation of distant objects; no subtle distinction between things seemingly alike, but really different; no attempts at establishing a position by elaborate arguments; yet

there is no rant. The speaker's conceptions are clear, his expressions forcible and hearty in no common degree ; he fires red-hot shot, and must do execution.

I have said that this last extract is characteristic ; it is so in regard to more than style ; it points to the great secret of the speaker's success throughout life. His dependence upon the aid of the Holy Spirit was not a merely formal acknowledgment that He is the Author of all good, and must be acknowledged as such. It ran through his whole life, prompting and sustaining a spirit of ceaseless prayer. For every personal gift, for every ministerial qualification, for a blessing on every act of duty performed, for himself, for others, he was a ceaseless suitor at the Throne of Grace. And he appeared to me as one who was always ready to engage in the exercise. I never saw him in a frame or in an employment in which prayer would have been unsuitable. And thus constantly " watching unto prayer " we may well believe that he was always watching for the answer also, and ready to receive it when it arrived. His habitual care not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God was manifest to all ; and thousands in all his circuits would be ready to say of him as of the prophet : " I perceive that this is a holy man of God, which passeth by us continually." No one wondered that his labours were owned of God ; the wonder was rather that any could resist the power which often attended his ministry, the weight of his rebukes, the pathos of his entreaties, the fidelity of his warnings, in a word, the " wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake."

His life will not have been written in vain if one minister shall learn from it the great lesson which it

teaches on the value of prayer. This is the key to his character, as the foregoing pages must have clearly shown to every careful reader. He began and ended everything with God. And if even a heathen could see that this was the way to success, shall we be blind to the lesson? Here is a man in humble life, with no other educational advantages than those of a Scotch parochial school, brought up to his father's trade as a shoemaker, who, by assiduous self-cultivation, begun and sustained under religious influences, becomes in a few years a powerful orator, able to interest, and instruct, and sway some of the largest congregations in the three kingdoms; and, both by his preaching and writing, an instrument of lasting good to tens of thousands. His fellow-countrymen may well be thankful for the parochial system which laid so sound a basis for his future acquirements, and the people of his choice may well be thankful for another name added to the long list of those among their ministers whose persevering labour has triumphed over early disadvantages; but let the glory redound to the true Author of all his good; and let it never be forgotten that for the motive to his ceaseless diligence, and for the success of his intellectual discipline, we must look to that Holy Spirit whose aid he continually invoked. "Who teacheth like Him?"

To the Methodist people the remembrance of Mr. M'Owan's life and labours, as they are here presented, may also prove advantageous. Piety and zeal are qualifications which God only can give, and for these He will be entreated. Men of His making will do His work, and for such men we should be chiefly solicitous. Upon religious earnestness the highest mental cultivation may be superinduced; but if mental cultivation be un-

duly esteemed, and religious earnestness come to hold an inferior place in general estimation, fatal consequences will most likely ensue. Mr. M'Owan prayed himself into a great man. Let us by the same means bring many such men into our ranks. Instead of mourning his removal and counting his loss irremediable, let us pray the Lord of the harvest for men who, like His first witnesses, will give themselves "continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word."

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